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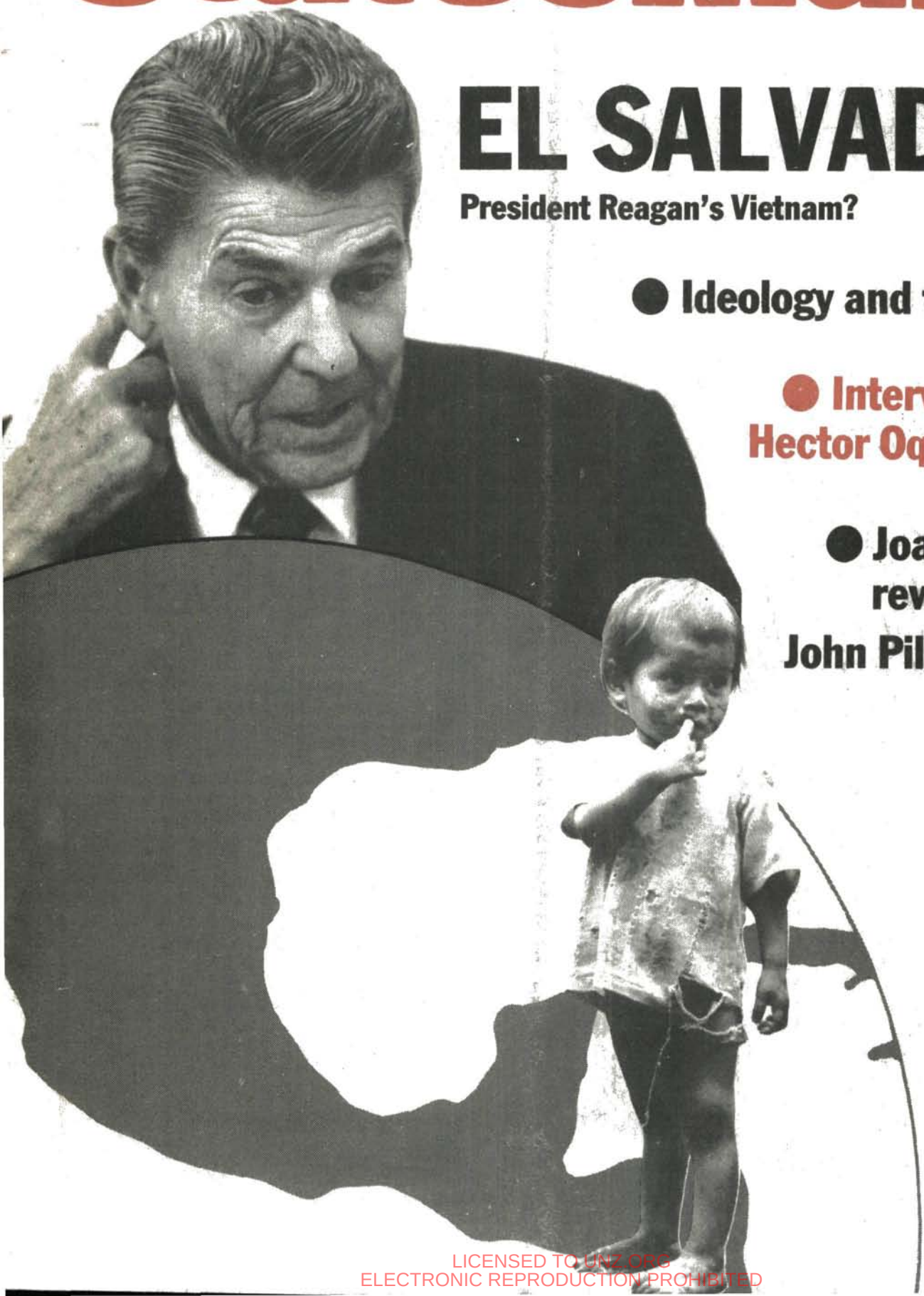

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Ideology and force

THERE ARE NOW awful parallels between the position that the Carter and Reagan administrations have produced in El Salvador and the position that the Kennedy and Johnson administrations produced in Vietnam. In each case the first President entered into what seemed to be a token act of neo-colonialism, not significant enough to concern the American Congress or people. In each case the military and political 'logic' of the situation then involved a growing American military, financial and political commitment to a situation which from one rainy season to the next got steadily worse.

In each case the necessity of the United States settling down to a political and moral 'long haul' needed to be justified in terms of a simplistic 'domino' theory. With Vietnam the countries of South East Asia and the Pacific were going to fall to communism in rapid succession, if support for an incompetent and corrupt régime in Saigon was not given in ever increasing amounts. Now in Central America, in President Reagan's words: 'If we cannot defend ourselves there, we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble, and the safety of our homeland would be put at jeopardy.'

In each case, the timing of the slide towards openly taking over effective power in the client state became involved at a critical stage in the run up to a Presidential election campaign – involving public promises that American military commitment would be limited, or (as now) would never directly involve American troops – only, as in Vietnam, the navy and air force and, as in El Salvador and Nicaragua, the CIA and irregular guerrillas. When the time came to tell the truth to the American public and politicians over Vietnam, the Gulf of Tonkin incident was effectively stage-managed to smother wiser counsels. Now in Central America the President is raising the spectre of a red tidal wave of revolution, sweeping across the continent and north to the Rio Grande.

There is a terrifying blindness about the way in which successive American administrations have approached countries in the throes of social and political revolution. The words put into President Reagan's mouth have a particularly crass quality, but the basic approach of all American Presidents since the war has been the same. The modishly liberal President Kennedy may have offered the 'sister republics south of our border a new alliance for progress'. What he gave them was the Bay of Pigs. (President Carter's Panama Canal Treaty has been almost the only contrary act of deliberate decolonisation in the region and he paid a heavy domestic political price for it.)

The blindness prevents American administrations at the political level from seeing that radical politics and revolutionary forces in most countries of the Third World are not the result of some Moscow, Peking or Havana inspired conspiracy, though they will of course attract some such support. They are the direct and inevitable consequence of grinding social and economic inequality and injustice. By definition, therefore, *military* aid to unpopular régimes, representing minority vested interests in banana republics, can do nothing to produce long-term social equilibrium. American policy towards the Third World in general and Latin America in particular, starting from this false analysis, then becomes further distorted by two elements. The first is ideological; the second has to do with old fashioned power politics.

THE IDEOLOGICAL difficulty arises from the fact that any American intervention has for domestic consumption to be presented as being in defence of 'democracy' and the support of free enterprise. (In many ways there is a close parallel here with nineteenth century British imperial assumptions about the inherent superiority of our politics and culture and the virtues of free trade.) The result is a wholly irrelevant emphasis on the form of 'democratic' elections and other symbols of Western-style politics in order to comfort American domestic political opinion.

It goes with an excessive willingness to listen to the arguments of the business interests involved in countries like El Salvador. The relevance to most chronically poor countries, dominated by entrenched oligarchies, is zero – particularly when they are locked in civil war.

When a country needs land reform and urgent redistribution of income and wealth the demands by American pro-consuls for image politics that are more presentable in Washington's eyes is obscenely irrelevant. When General Casanova, the current US sponsored candidate in El Salvador, says that his people and armed forces are grateful for US efforts to shore up 'democracy' he at least knows that he is only playing to an American gallery. □

'VICTORIAN ~VALUES~'

On 27 May the *New Statesman* will be publishing a special edition putting Mrs Thatcher's notions about Victorian values in their historical context. It will be publishing the contributions made at a meeting at Ruskin College, Oxford, on 22 May jointly sponsored by the History Workshop and the *New Statesman*.

The issues covered will include: self-help, the poor law and philanthropy, patriarchy and the family, penitentiaries and racism.

The meeting will be chaired by Beatrix Campbell. Contributors will include Gareth Stedman Jones, Leonore Davidoff, Catherine Hall, Michael Ignatieff and Raphael Samuel.

To be sure of getting a copy of this issue, place an order with your local newsagent. **If you would like to advertise your books, pamphlets, courses, films, plays, campaigns etc in the 27 May issue call: Laura Berryman, Steve Mitchell or Michael Roberts on 01-251 5487 now.**

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Survival plans abandoned

PROPOSALS for new civil defence regulations, which were tabled in Parliament last week, were presented as a device for compelling the many dissident 'nuclear free zone' local authorities to build nuclear bunkers and make war plans. But they actually mask the government's abandonment of any attempt to offer a civil defence policy that would be 'credible' even to its own supporters.

The regulations now published omit several key proposals contained in drafts shown to local authorities last autumn. Some of the changes are concessions to criticism from local authorities and their associations. But two critical new proposals have been dropped:

- **No evacuation:** a requirement for local authorities to plan for moving the population out of target areas has gone completely;
- **No public shelter survey:** local authorities were to have been ordered to conduct surveys to find and prepare 'public civil defence shelter'; this is also dropped completely.

The new version of the regulations also omits an earlier requirement that local authority bunkers be guaranteed to withstand even direct nuclear attack.

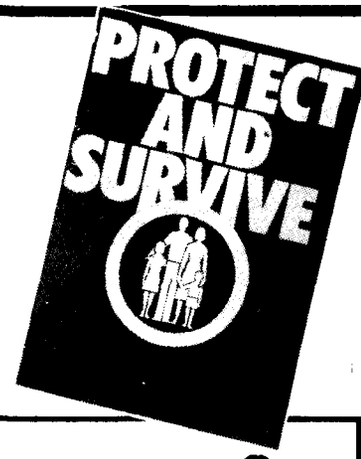
If passed by resolution of both Houses of Parliament, the regulations will come into force in July. But the Labour Party has decided to have the new proposals debated, rather than merely left 'on the table'. The debate will take place in mid-May.

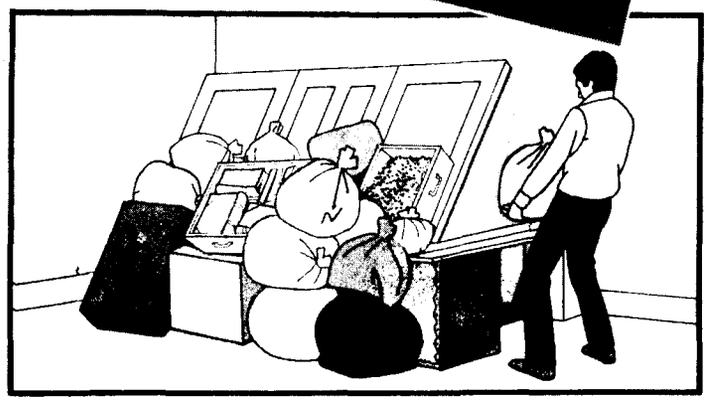
As reported previously in the *NS* (10 Dec. 1982), Cabinet committees were last autumn presented with the results of a study by the Shelter and Evacuation Working Party of the Cabinet Office. The study proposed two evacuation options, involving moving either 12 million or 30 million people. The options were turned down out of hand. Both had been widely supported by proponents of civil defence as being much more convincing to the public than the cynical advice to 'stay put' at home with hopelessly inadequate and rudimentary shelter, which is offered in the notorious pamphlet *Protect and Survive*.

The government has also abandoned, until 1984 at the earliest, all public civil defence activities – including the cancelled Hard Rock, whose forced abandonment was the genesis of the new laws.

A new series of Home Office civil defence advice pamphlets, intended to replace *Protect and Survive*, has been prepared but will not now be published. Another new volume from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, called *Home Defence and the Farmer* has been shelved. The Home Office had also planned to issue local authorities with a new set of planning assumptions for home defence, replacing over 60 circulars sent out since 1972.

One of the abandoned Home Office circulars, which advised local authorities how to create Public Civil Defence Shelters in such sites as underground car parks, has been ready to be issued for over 2 years. It will not now be published.





Home nuclear shelter suggestion from Home Office

The government has also axed plans for a new Civil Defence staff to be created at the Home Office, and regionally, in order to supervise local authorities' activities. The proposed Inspectorate, whose planned role of policing local authority compliance with the new regulations might have been expected to be politically attractive to Mrs Thatcher, would have involved about 100 new civil servants. It was rejected, without even an attempt at compromise. Even though the role of civil defence in supporting nuclear deterrence policies attracts ministers, they are apparently repelled by the idea of public spending on anything other than the armaments themselves.

'This government just hates civil servants', one civil defence specialist explained. Last year, the Home Office Scientific Advisory Branch which was responsible for civil defence research (including the evacuation plan) was trimmed to just 11 staff. In 1981, a proposed circular to local authorities, offering to pay for a huge increase of up to 550 emergency planning staff, was watered down to offer only encouragement for unspecified smaller increases.

The government's unwillingness to develop a 'credible' civil defence policy by spending more on ideas like evacuation has united the nuclear-free-zone authorities with many of their Tory opponents in a condemnation of the new regulations. The final, and most effective, nail in the government's civil defence coffin has been the wholehearted condemnation of medical planning for nuclear war in the report of the British Medical Association, formally published this week.

The BMA report drove the Home Office minister responsible for civil defence, Mr Patrick Mayhew, to fury, and to bitter regret that he had instructed Home Office civil servants to provide information on nuclear war effects to the BMA's study group.

During consultation over the new regulations, the conservative-dominated Association of County Councils (ACC) told Mr Mayhew that there was little point in issuing new regulations on their own as 'new responsibilities and words on paper will not meet the need' for a 'convincing response'. They added that: 'Whilst the underlying intention . . . of producing a credible policy is supported . . . the Association is concerned over the damaging impact of new regulations on public opinion . . . when the reality of achievement is so small.'

Like other local authority associations, the ACC criticised the lack of money. The government propose to spend about £50 million a year on home defence – a drop in the ocean, compared with nuclear defence expenditure.

Unpublished government circulars show that most of this small sum is being spent on government bunkers for 'control and co-ordination' and their communications or monitoring systems, rather than further research or public protection. An initial £2 million has been spent on purchasing six computer-controlled message switches for government Sub Regional bunkers and Warning and Monitoring Organisation HQs; another 33 of these switches will be required eventually.

Another major item is the purchase from Plessey of over 30,000 specially designed 'Radiac' instruments, which measure the radiation levels caused by nuclear fallout. They will cost over £20 million. In comparison, local authorities, who have the entire responsibility for assistance to the public, will get £13 million next year.

The huge expenditure on radiation fallout meters also belies the advice that Home Office ministers are giving Conservative candidates about responding to questions on civil defence. They are told to stress the need for civil defence in the event of *conventional* attack – and to avoid the questions that the government now concede are unanswerable about the value of any of their civil defence plans to the population in the event of a major nuclear attack. Conventional bombs do not, however, cause any radioactive fallout.

Duncan Campbell

City of London is falling down

SECRET PLANS have been drawn up by the City of London to demolish over two dozen buildings in a conservation area. In pursuit of its vast road-building plans – and in clear defiance of government advice – the City is also blighting a large number of other buildings.

The proposals are contained in a confidential planning committee report, which was approved six weeks ago. The report envisages an enormous urban freeway to the north of the City centre. This involves demolishing some charming Victorian buildings on the north side of Newgate Street, including the Post Office, which is a Grade 2 listed building. The street is part of a conservation area.

The same road requires the gutting or demolition of buildings on the south side of London Wall. The report itself describes two of these buildings (Nos. 1 and 2 Throgmorton Avenue) as being 'of considerable architectural merit'.

The City also intends to widen Bishopsgate, to the east of the centre. This involves the demolition of a number of buildings in both Bishopsgate and Gracechurch Street, including the former fire

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station in Bishopsgate, a Grade 2 listed building.

The City's freeway plan is part of a scheme that was first put forward in 1947, when the philosophy was to make more room for cars by building wider roads. Now that philosophy has changed: the City itself says in its plans that it wants to restrict car commuting. Yet its engineers are still pressing ahead with the old plans.

The report also contains details of two dozen other schemes which will require widespread demolition of buildings (15 buildings are affected in Fenchurch Street alone). These schemes are called 'as and when' improvements – planning jargon which means that the roads will be widened when the buildings are redeveloped. Effectively this policy causes large areas to become blighted, because the existence of the road plan reduces the development value of the site. In its advice to local authorities on preparing local plans, the Department of the Environment says that 'the use of "as and when" safeguarding lines is not recommended'.

Mick Hamer

City institutions can find out if their offices are blighted by sending an SAE to the editorial dept at the *NS* for a list of affected buildings.

CBI man's clumsy smear

THE SCOTTISH CBI has been connected with a clumsy attempt to smear a Third World pressure group, Scottish Education for Action and Development (SEAD), by alleging that it is an international marxist front.

Two weeks ago copies of the *Observer* colour supplement in Scotland contained a leaflet advertising the work of SEAD and asking for donations. This so angered one Scottish company anxious about its Third World markets that it contacted the CBI and claimed that at least four people said to be prominent in SEAD were members of the International Marxist Group (IMG). The company also suggested that this was incompatible with the fact that the organisation was partly funded by the government.

Gordon Casely, the Scottish CBI's press officer, then rang the *Sunday Times* correspondent in Scotland, George Rosie, to suggest that he follow up this 'interesting news tip-off'. Rosie – who has himself contributed an essay on multinationals to a recent SEAD publication – poured cold water on the allegations.

Casely confirmed to the *New Statesman* that he had passed on the allegations, but stressed that they were 'second hand'. He refused to name the company who had made them, although he said it was definitely not Coats Patons or James Finlay – two famous Scottish companies whose Third World activities SEAD has investigated and exposed.

The people erroneously named as IMG infiltrators included three SEAD organisers – Stephen Maxwell, a former vice-chairman of the Scottish National Party, Mark Lazarowicz, a Labour councillor, and Alan Sinclair, who has recently joined the Labour Party.

The fourth person named was myself – even though I have never been connected with the IMG, and my only contact with SEAD has been to write two articles in the *New Statesman* about their publications.

SEAD, which has built up a reputation as a very effective lobby group, receives about 7 per cent of its funding from the Ministry of Overseas Development. The rest of its £80,000 annual budget comes from supporters, charities, trusts and the EEC.

Rob Edwards

PQs do not produce the answers

'THERE is no better way of exposing the Metropolitan Police to the total limelight than by questioning the Home Secretary in Parliament,' London Tory MP Geoffrey Finsberg told a recent meeting on police accountability. But an analysis of Parliamentary Questions carried out by Camden Council's Police Unit shows that police authorities – which the GLC would like to see for London – succeed in eliciting far more information about their police forces than do MPs – the only people entitled to ask questions about the Met. Tory policy in Parliament and the GLC is firmly opposed to the establishment of a London police authority.

When Labour MP Frank Dobson asked for details of police weaponry, he was turned down by Patrick Mayhew on 10 March on public interest grounds. Five days later Merseyside Chief Constable Kenneth Oxford responded to a similar request from his police authority with a detailed description of his arsenal, CS gas and rubber bullets were on the list. Camden's police chief, Commander Frank Chambers, was equally prepared to reveal his officers' weaponry.

He also told local papers that 167 of his 830 officers were authorised gun users, although Mr Mayhew on 3 February refused Joan Richardson's request for just that information. Greater Manchester's Chief Constable James Anderton produced details of routinely armed patrols. An answer was not forthcoming when Ms Richardson requested details of London's routinely-armed officers.

Gun issue figures produced were subject to hurried revision. In Camden the figure went from 489 to 256. In Ealing and Hillingdon, confusingly, it went up from 160 to 307. The Home Office explained that the first figure was the number of guns issued rather than the number of issues. The Commons had earlier been told that it was too costly to provide individual issue figures.

A reply to Mr Dobson was revealing – only one higher executive civil servant from the Home Office worked full time on the Met, assisted part time by a principal and an executive officer, he was told. 'Parliamentary questions as a means of eliciting information about the Metropolitan Police are far from satisfactory,' is Camden's conclusion. 'There is no method of regular reporting or detailed examination of policing matters that parallels with the practice of police authorities. It is left to the vagaries of the Parliamentary system.'

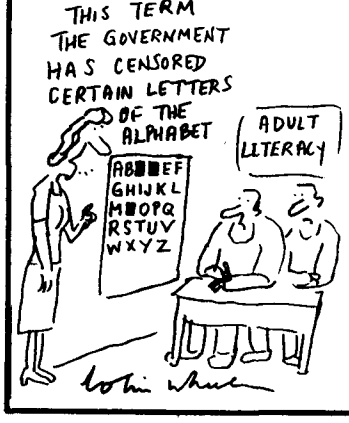
Charles Wright

MISCELLANY

Index on censorship

Mrs Thatcher's government has never been what you might call *nice*, but in the past few weeks it has revealed a particularly nasty side to its character; it has, in short, been taken over by the spirit of Senator Joe McCarthy. Set aside, for the moment, Michael Heseltine's 'revelation' that some CND members are socialists. Consider, instead, the following snippets. *Item:* It was widely reported last month that Gerard Vaughan's decision to hold back £3 million of grant from the National Association of Citizen's Advice Bureaux was connected with the fact that Joan Ruddock of CND works for a Citizen's Advice Bureau. *Item:* An adult literacy scheme came within an ace of having its £10,000 grant cut off because one of its students wrote an unflattering poem about Mrs Thatcher; the grant was saved only after the scheme had promised to exercise 'greater control'. *Item:* The Department of the Environment is carrying out a check on all projects which receive grants under the Urban Programme to ensure that none of them indulges in 'political' activity. *Item:* The Home Office is keeping a watchful eye on the Community Projects Foundation to make sure that its employees avoid 'political' activity. *Item:* The Department of the Environment has told the Manpower Services Commission that none of its youth employment schemes can have anything to do with 'community arts' activities (much too subversive, you see).

We could go on. And we intend to do so: if you come across examples of this new trend, please send them to the Miscellany column.



A question of balance

In this McCarthyite atmosphere, it's cheering to report that the best-laid smears gang aft agley. The Hillingdon Peace Council, a coalition of local groups in Middlesex, has just arranged a series of public lectures on disarmament. John Wilkinson, the Tory MP for Ruislip-Northwood, heard that the first lecture was to be addressed by Nikolai Ouspensky from the Soviet Embassy; he promptly wrote an open letter to the Peace Council deploring 'the fact that you have not invited a representative of the US Embassy to balance the lecture given by the First Secretary at the Soviet Embassy'. In fact, the Peace Council had tried several times to do just that, but the US Embassy had refused. A suitably contrite Wilkinson has now written a letter of apology to the Peace Council. 'I'm sorry I gave the wrong impression,' he says. Perhaps he might care to persuade Michael Heseltine to follow his example.

Mum's the word

Sally Oppenheim's son Philip, who has been adopted as the Tory candidate for Amber Valley, has always been touchingly loyal to his mother. At Harrow in the early 1970s he and some friends set up a magazine called *Lucifer* which featured a satirical parliamentary column written by Andrew Stuttaford, the son of another Tory MP. For Lucifer's second issue, Stuttaford's column included a jocular reference to Sally Oppenheim. 'You can't do that,' Philip Oppenheim hollered. Sally Oppenheim's name was duly removed before the paper went to press. A few years later, in 1979, young Philip and some friends ran a London newspaper called the *Saturday Evening Globe*. One of the early issues printed a long panegyric to the Tories' consumer affairs supremo – a certain Sally Oppenheim. The paper folded soon afterwards.

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Row at Open University

THE OPEN University is still stalling over an inquiry into an academic row which erupted 18 months ago, when a controversial research project was abandoned and an attempt made to sack the researchers.

Two researchers working on tests of child reading ability, Alan Stokes and Duncan Browne, said that the tests on which the project was based were not valid. The Education Faculty dean tried to suppress their report on the tests, while the project director dismissed their attitude as 'negative and perverse'.

The three-year project, which was awarded a £109,000 grant in 1979 by the Department of Education and Science, was abandoned in August 1981.

But project director Dr John Chapman is still pursuing his research at the Open University. Meanwhile, Alan Stokes claims he has been 'frozen out' of the Open University.

The project, to study the importance of 'textual cohesion' in reading, involved a new approach to an old method of testing reading ability. Children were given a sort of Blankety Blank test and asked to fill in the gaps in a passage of text so as to make the passage 'coherent'.

Stokes and Browne were worried that these tests of reading 'fluency' didn't compensate for various other factors which could affect reading ability and that vital terms themselves like 'fluency' were not defined. Stokes told the *New Statesman*: 'The tests might spuriously suggest that the reading difficulties of, say, immigrant children, were due to their inability to perceive something called "cohesion", which has yet to be adequately defined, let alone measured.'

By July 1981 no fewer than three independent assessments by outside academics had made damaging criticisms of the project. In April 1981 Stokes and Browne themselves wrote a report for the DES detailing their concern. Education Faculty dean John Raynor ordered them to produce just seven copies of the report, which would be 'embargoed' in his office. He also asked Stokes in an internal memo to 'do all you can to ensure that there is no gossip (e.g. in the bar) about the project'.

This was typical of Raynor's attitude to the whole episode. When the DES terminated the project he told the faculty: 'My view from the beginning has been that the interests of the faculty would be best served by limiting wider discussion.'

All five project staff, not including Chapman, were then given notice to quit, which was only withdrawn when it was pointed out that this was in breach of contract. When asked about this incident, an embarrassed OU press officer said: 'We do not discuss the employment conditions of specific people.'

Browne was then transferred to another department until the end of his three-year contract, when he departed with 'a nasty taste in the mouth'. Stokes was made redundant in October 1982, and still does unpaid research at the OU.

He has taken his complaint that research staff have been treated unfairly to his union, the Association of University Teachers, which is now discussing with the OU 'whether an internal inquiry is appropriate', according to the OU press officer.

Meanwhile Chapman is pressing on with his research. He acknowledges that the outside academic asked by the DES to give an opinion on the project 'didn't approve of the methodology of one part of it – that was the methodology which I thought I had to validate'. He has carried on 'in order to justify the amount of public money that has already been spent' on the project, and hopes to produce 'at least an interim report' by the end of the year.

The research continues even though the OU Secretary, Joe Clinch, warned Chapman's boss, Raynor, immediately after the DES grant was withdrawn: 'We need to be aware that the DES are our paymasters. [The OU is the only university which is funded directly by the DES, rather than by the University Grants Committee]. 'We need to protect ourselves from the criticism of misusing public funds to support research from which the DES has withdrawn.'

Howard Sharron and John Rentoul

Councillors get carried away

LABOUR councillors in Edinburgh are becoming increasingly alarmed by the Conservative administration's use of the police against them on council premises. On three separate occasions over the past six months, four Labour councillors have been arrested in the council chambers, including the Labour Group leader, Councillor Alex Wood, who has been apprehended twice.

The first incident occurred at a full council meeting last November following the Conservatives' refusal to hear a deputation of tenants arguing against the proposed sale of council houses in their area. During the debate on the sale, the tenants in the public gallery were continually told to keep quiet by the Lord Provost, Tom Morgan, until he eventually ordered them out. A small group of Labour councillors then blocked the entrance to the gallery and refused to allow the police access.

Two councillors, Alex Wood and Val Woodward, were arrested and charged with obstructing the police. A couple of weeks later they both received letters from the procurator fiscal (Scotland's public prosecutor) telling them that although the evidence was sufficient to justify prosecution, no criminal proceedings would be brought. They were warned that any future offence 'might well' lead to prosecution.

The second incident occurred during a Labour Party demonstration earlier this year against a surprise visit by the South African ambassador, Marius Steyn. During a protest sit-down outside the Lord Provost's room, three people were arrested, including Councillors Alex Wood and Eleanor McLaughlin, and charged with breach of the peace.

The third occasion was last week, when Councillor Bob Cairns was charged with breach of the peace and resisting arrest, after accusing Cllr Duncan Drummond Young, the Tory housing chairman, of telling a lie. As the adjourned meeting continued an hour later Cairns was asked first by council officers and then by the police to leave. In the end he was prised from a desk and carried out of the meeting still clinging to a chair – at which point the whole Labour Group walked out.

Labour councillors blame the increased use of the police on the Lord Provost's 'inept chairmanship' in a council where political power is quite finely balanced (the Conservatives only rule by the grace of one vote) police and senior council officials.

Labour are now trying to change the rules so that the police are only called into meetings when the council has specifically voted in favour of such action. The police themselves are known to be unhappy with the current situation. After the first incident, Edinburgh's three Labour MPs wrote expressing concern to the then Lothian and Borders Chief Constable John Orr. He told them that a special procedure to deal with disturbances at council meetings had been worked out between council officials, the police and the procurator fiscal with the aim of ensuring that the police were only called in as a last resort.

Rob Edwards

Break a leg for safety

A CAMPAIGN to improve the appalling safety record of the construction industry looks like floundering on the twin rocks of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) and government cutbacks.

Site Safe 83 was launched in January this year against a background of 45,000 injuries and 130 deaths in the industry each year, as many fatalities as in the rest of industry put together. But from 5 April it has become impossible to measure the campaign's effectiveness because the number of reported accidents will fall off dramatically, making comparisons with other years meaningless. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE), which is responsible for gathering figures, expects reported accidents in all industries to fall from 400,000 to just 80,000 each year.

Accidents at work will now only be reported if they result in the victim being off work for more than eight weeks, when responsibility for sick pay passes from the employer to the DHSS. A previous change in the system, in January 1981, which meant that the HSE no longer relied on employers to report accidents but took figures directly from claims for benefit at the DHSS, led to an immediate 50 per cent rise in the figures. The HSE is preparing a new scheme, but this will not be ready until next year.

Site Safe 83 was initiated by the Construction Industry Advisory Committee (CONIAC), a joint body of employers and unions. CONIAC chairman Victor Jordan, a deputy chief inspector at the HSE, said 'It is certainly going to make our job more difficult. We're going back to square one or even beyond it'.

The campaign has already been criticised by the Union of Construction and Allied Trades Technicians (UCATT) which has found 'no indication of positive improvements in attitudes by employers.' Victor Jordan admits that it is not reaching the small and medium sized companies which have the worst safety records, and disregard health and safety in the interests of low bids for contracts.

Mr Jordan's job has been made yet more difficult by reductions in the number of factory inspectors. It fell by 9 per cent last year, and no new staff have been allocated to deal with Site Safe. Despite construction's safety record, only 15 per cent of inspectors are allocated to the industry. They are more sorely tested than ever before as the number of small companies and subcontractors grows in response to unemployment.

Last month John Selwyn Gummer, under-secretary for employment, visited several City of London sites. Praising Site Safe, he said that 'this industry should build symbols of hope and renewal not monuments to carelessness and needless death.' Last week one HSE worker commented, 'If you want to appear in our statistics breaking a toe isn't good enough. Break a leg.'

Julian Birch and Pete Betts

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PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Why the Alliance needs *two* hung Parliaments

IF THE NEXT General Election produces a hung Parliament, there will be no deal between Labour and the Alliance, says Michael Foot. There will be no deal between the Conservatives and the Alliance, says John Biffen. We will not enter a coalition with either main party unless one of them changes their policies, says David Steel. We shall insist on a referendum on electoral reform, says David Owen.

In advance of the election, it is natural that the participants set out their most belligerent position, if only to have something to concede come the day. Foot and Biffen can no more be expected to meet the Alliance's terms on electoral reform today than a company management to concede its union's demands in advance of pay negotiations.

So we can take it that some of today's postures may not survive the election result. Let us suppose Labour wins the largest number of seats, but does not have an overall majority. What, in reality, would it have to concede? And what, in reality, could the Alliance hope to gain?

The first move would be Mrs Thatcher's. She may seek to stay in office, as Edward Heath did in similar circumstances in March 1974. Only when Heath failed to reach agreement with Jeremy Thorpe on the terms of a Conservative-Liberal deal did Heath advise the Queen to send for Harold Wilson. It is, however, even harder to envisage a Thatcher-Jenkins deal than a Heath-Thorpe deal. (For the sake of argument I am assuming that Jenkins rather than Steel would take the lead in these negotiations. The position would not materially change if it were Steel. Readers who wish to express their doubt, anger, or closely-argued views on this point in green ink on purple paper, should write to 'The Leader of the Liberal/SDP Alliance, House of Commons, London SW1,' and only contact me if they get a reply.)

Lacking a deal, Mrs Thatcher would have to resign. Michael Foot, as leader of the largest party, would be invited to try and form a government. But what then? Were Foot to seek a deal with Jenkins, it is almost certain that none could be devised that either could sell to his own troops. Foot could not persuade his followers to accept a Queen's Speech that contained a commitment to introduce PR. Jenkins could not sell to his Alliance colleagues a Queen's Speech without it.

So a *formal* deal of any sort, let alone coalition, is unlikely. It is far more likely that, in the first instance, Foot would try to form a minority government, as Wilson did in March 1974. 'Ah,' say the more enthusiastic Alliance types, 'we could quickly scupper that. We would threaten to join with the Tories in voting down the Queen's Speech if Foot didn't meet our demands. He would soon change his tune when he realised the danger.'

ON THE OTHER hand, the old boy might not. It is not simply a question of Labour activists seeking to imprison their leader: if *that* were Foot's only impediment, he has the capacity to overcome it. Rather, it is probable that Alliance enthusiasts would exaggerate their bargaining power in a hung Parliament.

A fair amount of attention has been paid recently to hung councils in cities like Liverpool and sprawling urban districts like Calderdale in Yorkshire. Last Saturday's *Week in Politics* on Channel Four portrayed some of Calderdale's curiosities: its lack of clear political direction rather undermines the wilder claims that are sometimes made for multi-party government. If this week's local elections produce more hung councils, we can expect further parallels to be drawn with Westminster.

But there is one decisive difference between local and national elections. Local elections are held at fixed intervals; national elections are not. It is this difference that would give Foot much of the power he seeks, and deprive the Alliance of much of the leverage it needs.

This point may be illustrated by considering what would happen in a hung Parliament if we had fixed-term elections. The Alliance could help vote down every minority administration until some grouping of MPs came together to construct a majority. And the knowledge that the Alliance possessed this power might well hasten the process of accommodation. The Alliance would be able to threaten use of its power for the four or five-year duration of a fixed-term Parliament.

But, as we do not have fixed-term Parliaments, the Alliance lacks that power. Or, to be more exact, it could only threaten to bring down a minority government at the risk of precipitating a new General Election in which it might well lose its balance of power. It is as if the Alliance possessed the political equivalent of a nuclear bomb: it could only destroy its opponents at the risk of destroying itself.

So Foot's secret weapon would be his ability to dissolve Parliament and hold a new General Election, if he lost the vote on the Queen's Speech. It was this threat that enabled Wilson's minority administration to survive from March until October 1974. At the time there was much heated debate as to whether, in fact, the Queen would grant Wilson a dissolution if he lost his first major vote. The advice Wilson received from his constitutional adviser, Lord Crowther-Hunt, was that Wilson *would* be granted a dissolution, as the only possible alternative Prime Minister, Edward Heath, had acknowledged failure in his attempt to form a government. Buckingham Palace separately received similar advice.

It remains in the theoretical power of the monarch to refuse a dissolution. But, as Vernon Bogdanor points out in a book published next week, detailing the wheeling and dealing that has accompanied past hung Parliaments*, the prospects of the Monarch in practice refusing the Premier are extremely remote: 'the ability to obtain a dissolution yields a great accretion of strength to the Prime Minister and his government.'

Suppose, then, a minority Labour government brought in a Queen's Speech containing emergency measures to stimulate the economy, and a promise to keep cruise missiles out of Britain, but nothing on renationalisation or withdrawal from the Common Market; and nothing on PR. Foot could sell that to Labour MPs on the basis that renationalisation, Common Market withdrawal, and full-blooded unilateralism would have to wait for a *majority* Labour government. The Alliance would have little to object to in the content of the Queen's Speech – only the omission of PR. Would Alliance MPs risk prolonging Britain's recession in those circumstances, and provoking either a new election within weeks, or a constitutional crisis? Or would the Alliance wait a few months for another election, called when Foot was ready, and hope for further electoral gains then?

A second hung Parliament would give the Alliance greater bargaining power; it would be difficult for either the Labour or Tory leader to keep Britain in a state of permanent electionitis merely to avoid making substantial concessions to the Alliance. The fact remains that it will almost certainly take *two* hung elections before the Alliance can hope to achieve its aims.

Meanwhile Foot would have every reason to hope that after a few months of minority Labour rule, the electorate will vote to dispose of Foot's problems, Jenkins's hopes, and my opportunity to write articles like this. □

* *Multi-party politics and the Constitution*, published by Cambridge University Press, £17.50 hardback, £6.95 paperback.

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No longer a watchdog

The Countryside Commission is supposed to look after the public interest. Jim Perrin reports how under the Tories it has become dominated by landowners

ANYONE WITH A PASSING interest in the subject can scarcely have failed to notice the criticism, emanating chiefly from environmental lobbies, which has been directed at the Countryside Commission since the passage of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The statutory commitment of the Countryside Commission, as laid down in the Countryside Act 1968, is towards the 'conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside, and encouraging the provision and improvement, for persons resorting to the countryside, of facilities for the enjoyment of the countryside, and open-air recreation in the countryside'. Yet, under the present government, the Countryside Commission seems increasingly to be ignoring – or, at least, shifting the emphasis away from – its statutory obligations. This trend increased with the greater autonomy granted it under the 1981 Act.

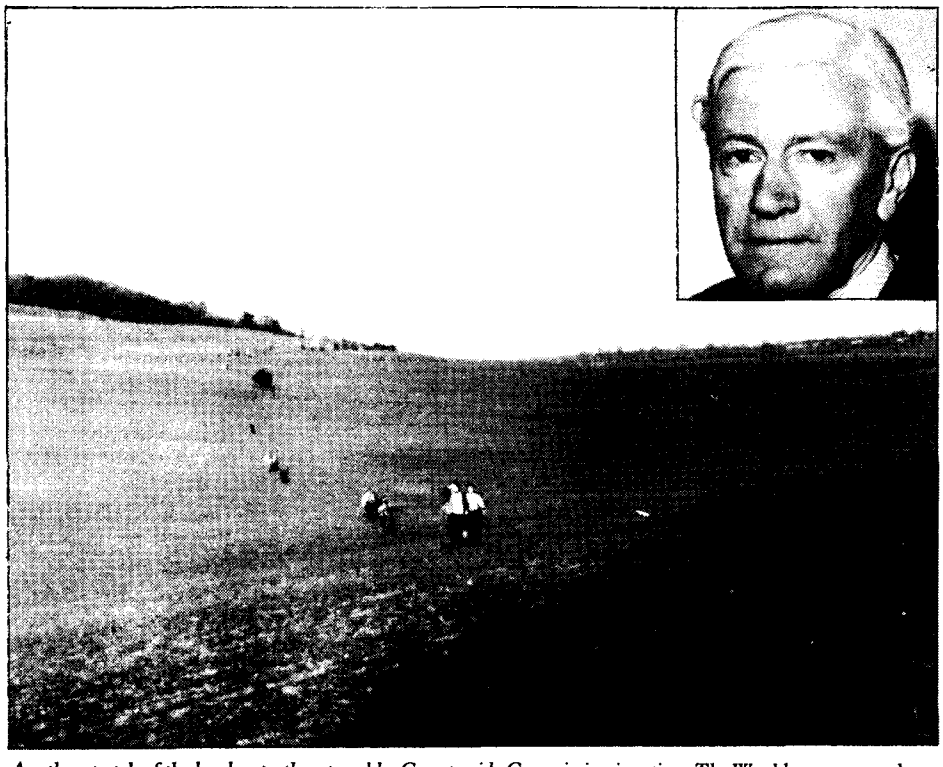
There has always, perhaps inevitably, been a political aspect to appointments to the governing body of commmssioners. Whether this is desirable in the country's chief environmental watchdog is open to debate. What is beyond question is the trend (under Thatcher's administration) towards obviously biased Commission representation.

Commissioners are appointed initially for three years. Subject to reasonably conscientious performance, their office is generally extended, more or less indefinitely, in two or three-year periods. The comparative breakdown of appointments to the CC and its parallel environmental quango, the Nature Conservancy Council, during the periods 1974-1979 and 1979-1983, makes interesting reading. Labour, during its five-year period, made 31 appointments to the two bodies, while the present government has made 39 in less than four years of office.

Labour's choice represented a wide spectrum: balancing out academic, scientific, recreational, farming, forestry, local government, industrialist, planning, media and trade union interests. By contrast, the Conservatives have concentrated on farming and forestry. Eighteen out of their 39 appointments have been involved in that area. Of these 18, ten either hold or have held office in the National Farmers' Union, Country Landowners' Association, or their Scottish or Welsh equivalents. Most of the important positions are now controlled by this faction. The Nature Conservancy Council's current chairman, Ralph Verney, is a former president of the CLA and his deputy, Viscount Arbuthnott, of the Scottish Landowners' Federation. On Verney's retirement this month, he is most likely to be replaced by Sir Hector Monro, the junior minister who prepared the Wildlife and Countryside Bill, of which both the CC and the NCC were most critical during its passage through Parliament.

Monro, apart from being a Scottish landowner, is also a member of the Area Executive Committee of the National Farmers' Union for Scotland. The chairman of the Countryside Commission, Derek Barber, is a former regional adviser to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. His experience on Gloucestershire's War Agricultural Executive Committee was concerned with maximising arable acreage and taking over all land which occupiers themselves found impossible to cultivate. His book, *Farming for Profits*, was a prime mover in the widespread managerial and technological changes in farming which affected the post-war countryside – changes which were critically examined in the seminal study *New Agricultural Landscapes*, prepared by the CC under the chairmanship of John Cripps and published in 1974.

This factionalising of the environmental watchdogs is further underwritten by an apparent weeding-out policy operated, in particular, against the recreational interest. The most infamous example of this occurred in the case of Mr Gerald McGuire, deputy secretary of the Youth Hostels' Association and a member of the Ramblers' Association. McGuire is one of the most widely respected figures in the outdoor movement. During his three-year term at the Commission, he attended every meeting and gained the full confidence of staff and members. Yet, in August 1979, on the expiry of his term, he was not re-appointed – despite consistent urging by the Ramblers' Association, the most important and influential outdoor recreational lobby in Britain. During the same period, appointments to the Commission included Mr Meuric Rees, a farmer, now chairman of the Committee for Wales; Mr Mark Schreiber, another farmer; Mrs John (sic) Hooson, a farmer's wife, whose husband is chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the NFU, and Mr John Quicke, a Devon landowner and former president of the CLA. The only recreational body now represented on the CC, and that by only one



Ramblers' Association

Another stretch of the landscape threatened by Countryside Commission inaction: The Wealdway, across the Kentish North Downs, was opened as a long-distance footpath in 1981. Now, the MoD is proposing to use the area for military training – including mine-laying training. A public enquiry is due in September, but the Ramblers Association isn't hopeful that the CC will get involved. 'They tend to be cautious,' a spokesperson said, 'when another government body is involved. They're worried that they might be sat on from a great height.' Inset: Derek Barber, chairman of the Countryside Commission.

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member, is the YHA.

This bias is not only evident in appointments to the Commission. There appears also to be an internal bias in the appointment of executive officers. Mr Patrick Leonard's is a case in point. Under the chairmanship of John Cripps and Directorship of Reg Hookway, at a time when the CC was rapidly gaining credibility with those interests to which it has a statutory obligation, Patrick Leonard, the deputy director, established a reputation for sound, radical and innovative policy. When, at the end of 1980, on the retirement of Reg Hookway, the directorship became vacant, Leonard was heir-apparent and the commissioners were prepared to appoint him. It appears that his appointment was vetoed and a more amenable candidate brought in.

This whole trend has left the CC with a majority representation of farming, forestry and landowning interest on its council. The effect of this can already be seen in the direction of policy and in the increasingly propagandist publicity that the CC puts out. In *Countryside Issues and Action*, a prospectus and policy document issued last year, the Commission appears, among other things, to drop its long-standing advocacy of planning controls relating to forestry and of moorland reclamation in National Parks. It also specifically diminished its commitment to the promotion of recreation and announced an end to its programme for designating long-distance footpaths.

THE LAST FOOTPATH to be designated, the Wolds Way in Yorkshire, caused contention for many years between, on the one hand, the Ramblers' Association and on the other, Lord Middleton, largest of Yorkshire landowners. The point of dispute was whether or not its route should lie through the deserted mediaeval village of Wharram Percy. The Ramblers' Association had shown that the path through this village was public and lobbied for it to be the route. Middleton, current president of the CLA, resisted. When the route designation was published, he was found to have carried the day – the path had been re-routed along a narrow and dangerous metalled road. To add insult to injury, the CC invited Middleton to officiate at the opening ceremony; which, therefore, the normally staid RA decided to boycott. Derek Barber's reply to questioning on this sequence of events deserves to be quoted:

> I find it very extraordinary that a body like the Ramblers' Association, a responsible body, should have taken that attitude. I – the Commission – had built a bridge for them which would have helped them to a greater extent than would otherwise have been the case throughout the North of England – perhaps throughout Britain. But they chose to snub the President of the CLA! It was an extremely unfortunate decision, and I thought didn't show terribly good judgment.
>
> *Interviewer:* But I gather they were rather incensed at the detailed route of the Wolds Way?
>
> Well, if you get me into detail we'll get stuck . . .

The above illustrates the degree of concern shown by the CC hierarchy towards the recreational interest that it is obliged to represent.

The present direction of the Commission's activity obviously owes a good deal to Michael Heseltine's era at the Department of the Environment, particularly to his experience of the inner cities in the wake of the Toxteth riots. This has had the curious, rather ambiguous effect of turning the CC's attention away from the preservation and management of such few country and wilderness areas as remain in England and Wales, towards reclamation schemes in the derelict, waste, or under-used land on the urban fringes. This is not a new preoccupation on the part of the CC, and the reasoning behind it, in terms of easy public accessibility in a time of economic decline, is sound, if complacent.

What is disturbing is the suspicion that this policy accords all too well with a government which has every reason to mask unemployment figures through short-term, low-paid labour projects operated by the MSC, and which is willing to use, as its instrument in their implementation, commissioners whose own interests make them all too ready to support recreational projects on the outskirts of urban concentrations. The more CC finance is ploughed in there, the less from a reducing budget is available for monitoring trends in the countryside itself, and the freer the hand that the farming and forestry interest has to do what it wants with the landscape. Those who think this is straining after gnats would do well to remember the Cabinet papers, leaked some three years ago, which reported the government's intention to 'reduce over-sensitivity to environmental considerations'.

The CC's major initiative of the moment runs under the title of 'The Uplands Debate'. Its genesis lies in the Cripps/Hookway/Leonard era at the CC; but, however respectable its antecedents, it has undergone some tactical shaping at the hands of the present regime. It consults by selective invitation, rather than by open public meeting, and, in the chairman's words, the groups to be consulted comprise 'farmers and landowners, council members and officials, the community and voluntary bodies'.

The Commission's remit to represent conservation and recreation is sadly disregarded in that list. Much of the research work already done into the future of the uplands is of great value, but the operation of the present consultative procedure raises the question of how selective the Commission will be in passing on to government recommendations based on research and consultative material.

Following, as it does, a pragmatic and non-interventionist line, the Commission seems unlikely to achieve any reversal of what the agricultural community is doing to the landscape; which is, for the most part, inimical to conservation and recreation – under which headings lie the interests of the majority of the population. It is hard not to feel sceptical about the kind of concessions likely to be won by Barber's diplomacy and pragmatism from the increasingly embattled farming industry now substantially represented on his governing body. □

NORTHERN IRELAND

Knock at the door

Stephen McRandal relives an everyday event in the life of the Province

JIM'S CHEST CLAMMED UP. He tried to suck air through his teeth. 'There's a policeman at the back door. Pointing a machine gun through this window.'

I was hoping that his words were some kind of bad joke that I would be able to reprimand him for severely; but, when I turned my head to look through the back window, I saw that it was no joke. A policeman pointed a machine gun at me.

Not wanting the panic I felt to take over completely, I said, 'No problem.' I added, 'They're not coming in here for us.'

I followed Jim to the back door and, in the yard, we both asked the policeman what the problem was.

Unanswered, we were forced back inside the flat. Lots of policemen arrived then. Some went out and let more in through the front door. They asked us for identification. We gave them our dole cards.

They had the attitude of conquerors. They were disgusted by us. We were unshaven, unclean, unemployed. They went into the other flatmate's bedroom.

'Get your kacks on,' said one, and Marty appeared sheepishly in his dressing gown.

'I was feeling bad enough this morning,' I said, and I kind of half laughed. Marty made a weak smile and looked to the ground.

One of our captors spoke then.

'I was feeling rough maself,' he said, as though he was just a regular guy. I looked at him. He had a machine gun trained on me. I looked at the ground. Two of them started kicking at the door to the upstairs flat.

'The doorbell works,' said Jim, but the police ignored Jim and smashed the door in.

There was no one in upstairs at the time. ▶

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed (on postcards, please).

☐ A 10-ft high model of a cruise missile helped Cheltenham florist Sue Artus to a place in Europe's largest professional floristry competition as the United Kingdom representative. The missile was Sue's choice in the free expression section of the competition and, using a selection of red and white flowers, she created a feeling of lift-off and power. – *Gloucestershire Echo* (Mary-Anna King)

☐ Lady Crossman was hunting almost as soon as she could walk: 'I followed the hunt on a donkey at the age of three and then I had a little pony called Blackie. Yes, I was blooded. I think all children want to be blooded.' – *The Times* (Nigel Ramsay)

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In May of 1982, a respectable magazine had accepted a story written by me; so, during the police raid, I felt sure that whatever took place would, at least, be published.

Later that day, I wrote about the total invasion of privacy as a rape. Our rapists, I described as sick men. Nine months have passed. I am calmer now. Perhaps they were not so sick.

IN THE MIDDLE of the raid, the woman from the upstairs flat returned home. She had been out doing Saturday morning shopping. She found the door to her flat smashed in and armed police tramping everywhere. Ignoring everything, she set her shopping basket down on the hall floor. She spoke to Jim.

'Have you moved back in here now?' she said, and Jim, flabbergasted at her coolness, spoke back to her across his guards.

'Yea. I've moved back in here now.'

It was funny.

She started to say something else, but was interrupted and taken upstairs for questioning. Shopping basket and all.

Jim kept freaking out about why this was happening to us. He kept repeating his questions.

'Look, it's only natural to want to know why this is happening to us.'

The police ignored Jim's questions. Eventually, they grew irritated by his persistence.

'Did you get a report about this house, or something?' he said.

His voice became louder and the situation more tense.

'They didn't get a report about this house, Jim. Nobody reported us.'

I spoke even louder than Jim and the tension broke to be replaced by humiliating acceptance.

'I need some reggae music,' I said, and stood up and put a twelve-inch single on the turn-table. 'Tribulation', it was called.

Our guards, expecting republican rebel music were bemused. When the plainclothes men arrived I was filled with a nauseating fear, greater even than that caused by the armed uniforms. I have had dealings with plainclothes men before. In small rooms with no windows.

The plainclothes men were very jovial as they confidently strode through our living room. They chuckled to each other. One rubbed his hands together with glee and nodded over at us.

'See you boys later,' he said.

We waited in anticipation.

They separated us for questioning. Me, they brought into the back yard.

Their questions were only routine. The kind they normally ask in the street.

I suppose the raid was a mistake. When they were finished questioning us, they laughed and left.

On the way out the door, one said, 'Sure ye can tell this in the pub tonight and get a free drink bought fer ye.'

But stories like this are cheap in Belfast pubs. There is nothing illegal in what the police did. They have no reason to give us an explanation.

We have no right to expect one. □

UNIONS

Merger mania

Francis Beckett chronicles current manoeuvrings

UNIONS REPRESENTING over 200,000 workers have thrown in their lot with bigger brethren; the Trade Union Congress was told last September. This September, it will hear of another 100,000.

Small unions in declining industries and big unions with declining memberships find that their needs coincide. The small unions, often operating dangerously close to the margin, are having to choose between big single-industry unions, or giant general unions like the TGWU and the General, Municipal and Boilermakers (GMB). The choice that they make will determine the shape of the movement in the 1990s.

The civil service is, in theory, an example of a group of unions poised to form one single-industry union. The biggest, the Civil and Public Servants Association (CPSA) and the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS), have produced a joint paper, 'Going Forward Together', for their annual conferences this month. They aim to build up to a ballot of both memberships in autumn 1985.

SCPS members, mostly in higher grades, fear domination by the larger, lower-paid CPSA membership. They have an efficient, tightly organised union – unlike the CPSA, whose political volatility (which can throw up Kate Losinska one year and militant Kevin Roddy the next) frightens them.

Many CPSA members dislike the idea of belonging to the same union as their bosses, which they fear will blunt their low pay campaign. The CPSA's left thinks that SCPS leaders are centralist and Stalinist; its right thinks they are left-wing manipulators. No one is confident that the 1985 date with the Electoral Reform Society will be kept.

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If it is, the newly merged mammoth could go head-hunting among the other six civil service unions. Otherwise it will be open season. The TGWU has a finger in the civil service (as in most places) and the small, struggling Civil Service Union is privately making its clear that it is open to all offers.

Clive Jenkins's ASTMS also hovers. For among private sector white collar unions, the open season is here. The general unions have started white collar sections, and ASTMS and APEX are feeling the pinch – in both finance and membership.

THREE YEARS AGO they tried to merge. Political differences and years of unremitting competition for members and jockeying for influence in the TUC were too strong. Now APEX is moving towards the more right-wing general unions, with a joint recruitment campaign with the GMB and the electricians. The closer they get – and talk of eventual amalgamation hangs heavy in the air – the more vulnerable and isolated ASTMS becomes. Some left-wingers believe that all roads lead to the TGWU. ASTMS's much canvassed alternatives would be a merger with the AUEW's white collar section, TASS, or the taking over of smaller unions. There is scarcely a small union General Secretary who could say, hand on heart, that he has not heard from Clive Jenkins.

Certainly the 30,000-strong Merchant Navy Officers (MNAOA) have; but they are seriously considering an offer from APEX. General Secretary Eric Nevin's other suitors include the TGWU, but he looks at all of them, he says, 'like a company that gets a takeover bid'.

MNAOA could form the nucleus of a much talked about federation of professional unions, including the airline pilots (BALPA), the engineers and managers (EMA) and the colliery managers (BACM) – which, on present membership, would bring them jointly over the 100,000 which guarantees a TUC General Council seat.

The logical merger in shipping cannot happen. The National Union of Seamen, whose dire financial straits will worsen when the shipowners' subvention is cut off this year, sees no common interest with MNAOA and is likely, sooner or later, to go down the TGWU route.

Relationships among the print unions became so confused that, in June 1981, Len Murray called together the five General Secretaries to try to promote mergers. Now there are only three unions. Over a quarter of a million print workers are in SOGAT 82 and nearly 150,000 in NGA 82, and these two started talking last week. Difficulties include conflict between craft workers (in the NGA) and the relatively unskilled. But goodwill is now there – and SOGAT 82 General Secretary Bill Keys wants to see one union for print before he retires in four years.

The starting gun for these talks was fired by the third print union, the 32,000 strong journalists' union, the NUJ. The NGA wanted to merge with the NUJ before talking to SOGAT. But one wing of the NUJ is too status conscious to merge with printers, and the other wing sees them as

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ideologically suspect. The NUJ set up an Amalgamation Working Party elected by its conference. This body spent much time ensuring that the merged union would have a woman's seat on its executive, mandatory equality officers in each branch, and an annual women's conference. When the NGA discovered that the NUJ itself did not have most of these things, it asked to talk to the NUJ's Executive, instead. Last month's NUJ conference refused to allow this, and abruptly ceased to be a factor in print union politics. It is likely therefore to look increasingly longingly at the broadcasting unions.

These have their own troubles. Ever since the merger between television technicians (ACTT) and BBC staff (ABS) fell foul of the courts, their relationship has deteriorated. ACTT, unlike ABS, is mainly a craft union. Nevertheless, they continue to circle warily about each other – and the TUC wants to see them getting together with the printers, too.

PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSIES even keep university teachers (AUT) away from college lecturers (NATFHE). NATFHE's proposed standard regional structure is seen by many AUT members as the start of the slippery slope. But the most fascinating quadrilles are being performed in the engineering and steel industries, where the boilermakers' recent choice of a general union created the GMB. Where the rest go will do as much as anything to determine the shape of British trade unionism. There are contradictory winds.

Up to the end of last month everyone assumed the 7,000-strong blast furnacemen would soon join the Iron and Steel Trades (ISTC). Then the blast furnacemen's 15-strong Council decided in favour of the engineering section of the AUEW – which puts pressure on the ISTC, whose membership is declining with the industry, to consider joining them there.

The 9,000-strong Patternmakers are being wooed by six unions: two sections of AUEW (the engineering section and TASS); ASTMS; APEX; GMB; and the electricians (EEPTU). The executive ruled out right-wingers APEX and EEPTU and has set out its demands to the rest: a separate section; a significant degree of autonomy; election of officials. Their suitors' replies will be considered by the November conference.

The 62,000-strong Sheet Metal Workers' conference in June will decide between the TGWU and TASS. By a majority of one the executive is recommending the TGWU, despite General Secretary George Guy. The next two months' intense lobbying will produce familiar anti-TGWU arguments.

Both unions promise a separate section and a degree of autonomy. But, it is being said, only TASS can deliver. Power in the TGWU is in the hands of Regional Secretaries and, when a deal is done with Transport House, they will decide if it is delivered, and their decision is final.

Theoretically the TGWU is better organised for merging than anyone else. It has been in the merger business longer than any other union – since 1921 – which is why it is bigger than any other union. Many workers owe the survival of trade unionism in their industry to a timely TGWU takeover. It is a federation of trade groups, so that, when it merges, it simply has to create a new trade group.

But a trade group national secretary has practically no staff; no direct means of communicating with his members; and no control over officials in the regions. Real power is in the regions.

Farmworkers and dyers and bleachers are ending their first year in the TGWU in a mixture of hope and frustration. Farmworkers wanted to keep their newspaper, certain key staff, their own officials in the regions and an agricultural seat on the TUC General Council. It now looks as though they will get most of this, but not without a struggle. They are unlikely to get the General Council seat, which, under the new system, is no longer in the TGWU's gift – and that will weaken the TGWU's hand in future.

But history is a powerful force. When you have politically opposed another of your industry's unions for years, competed with it for members, coped with craft and professional jealousies between the two memberships, you may prefer the bolthole provided by the general unions. □

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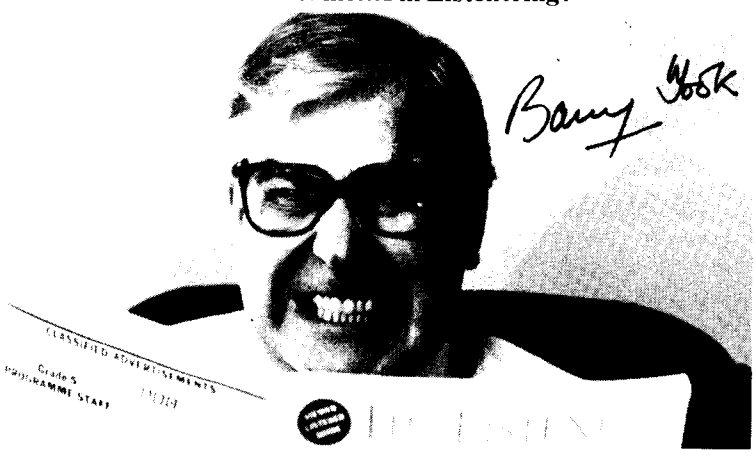

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DEFENCE

Resigning time

Philip Geddes gives the background to the sudden departure of the Royal Navy's ship designer

IN NORMAL TIMES the resignation of the Admiralty's chief ship designer would pass unnoticed. A few lines of quiet appreciation for a lifetime's dedicated service would appear in the Journal of the Royal Institute of Naval Architecture. But these are not normal times. The deficiences in warships revealed by the Falklands War have ended the decent obscurity in which, until now, Mr Rawson and his colleagues have worked.

Not that he had – officially, at least – a bad war. The White Paper on the lessons of the Falklands gave Mr Rawson and his colleagues a pat on the back: 'It is clear that RN ships are strong and reliable platforms able to operate continuously at sea even in the most difficult weather conditions. No fundamental design defects have been identified.'

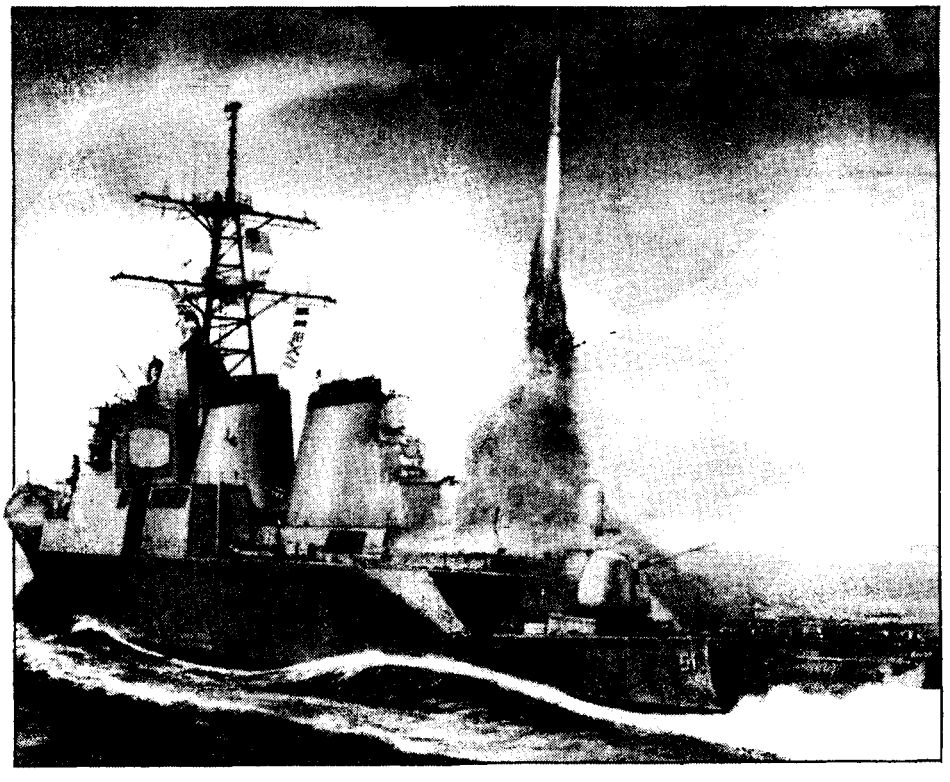
Unfortunately, the experience of the men who used Mr Rawson's ships did not quite match the bland smugness of the White Paper. But the trenchant criticisms raised by the Task Force during debriefings on its return somehow got lost in Whitehall when the White Paper was being written. Many officers see this as a tribute to the political skills and lobbying power of Ken Rawson and his department.

But while Mr Rawson won the battle over the White Paper, he lost a much more important one. He was the driving force behind the controversial Type 23 frigate design, details of which were exclusively revealed in the *New Statesman* last autumn (*NS* 17 September 1982). The Type 23 design was intended to replace the numerous Leander class ships as the workhorse of the navy in the remaining years of this century – a cheap, robust and effective weapons platform which would meet the navy's requirements for anti-submarine warfare in the North Atlantic. The Naval Staff hated Mr Rawson's new design, condemning it as 'a compromise . . . with areas of operational risk . . . insofar as vulnerability and redundancy are concerned.'

The Type 23 testing programme has run into serious trouble. It seems that the ship is incapable of carrying the load demanded of it. To accommodate its key anti-submarine device, the 50-ton towed array sonar gear, almost all other effective weapons and top deck weight have had to be stripped out. An Exocet mounting has gone, together with some key radar equipment. The 4.5 inch gun that the navy wanted – and which proved so effective in the Falklands – has had to be replaced with a 76 mm Oto Melara pop gun. This is the sort of weapon that an armed trawler would carry. On a 3,000-ton frigate it will be absurd – a bit like an air pistol being carried as the main armament of a tank.

At the same time, the projected cost of the Type 23 has risen from £84m to over £100m (at 1981/2 prices). What started out as a cheap frigate has rapidly become an expensive one, without being any better a ship than existing ones. And as the price of the Type 23 rises, so the government's commitment to it sinks. On 1 July 1982, the then Defence Secretary, Mr John Nott, announced that he had approved the design of the Type 23 and that production orders would follow shortly. No orders have yet been placed. Recently, when approached for an interview on the subject, the Minister of State for Procurement, Mr Geoffrey Pattie, declined: 'I do not believe the time is yet ripe for a discussion on the Type 23. The final design of the ship will not be settled for some time and our process of analysis and decision making is still in a very fluid state.' This was a severe blow to Mr Rawson and his department. The 'sinking' of the Type 23 is one major reason for Mr Rawson's abrupt resignation – he is reported to be indignant that ministers have turned down his professional advice.

More bang for a buck: the US Navy's new Burke class



THE SHIP THAT IS LIKELY to replace the Type 23 will add injury to Mr Rawson's indignity. It will be a private design, which is bad enough – worse, it will come from a design team that Mr Rawson regards with contempt. For the past five years he had been locked in acrimonious debate with a small team of private ship designers, Thornycroft Giles Associates. The argument can be summarised as 'short and fat' v. 'long and thin'. The Royal Navy has traditionally built its ships long and lean, with a length beam ratio of 10:1. In conventional wisdom, speed is a direct function of length – in other words, to achieve high speeds, hull shapes must be long and thin. Thornycroft Giles, on the other hand, have built a reputation on the basis of a series of short, fat ships. Despite being a tiny outfit, they have an impressive track record. Founded by Commander Peter Thornycroft, a member of the famous ship designing family, the firm originally designed 40ft pilot boats. Thousands have been made and they are legendary for their solid construction, seaworthiness and speed. From that, the firm moved on to a patrol craft design for the Mexican Navy, the Aztec patrol boat. It, again, was a success and led to a 150-foot offshore patrol boat design, the Osprey. The length beam ratio of the Osprey was about 6:1; despite which, it managed quite respectable speeds. The ship was offered to the Royal Navy – and turned down, on the advice of Mr Rawson. Despite this setback it was sold successfully to Denmark and Burma.

Thornycroft Giles have now turned their attention to the problems of the Royal Navy. Thanks to Mr Rawson, the Navy has been cursed with a succession of very expensive lean ships which, while they may look beautiful, have very limited range and can carry few weapons. They are also sensationally expensive: the real price of a frigate has risen fourfold since 1950. The result is a

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navy made up of fewer and fewer 'gold plated' ships. Thornycroft Giles have designed a new frigate, the S90, which would cost about half the current price, while having much greater range and a massive weapons fit. (With only 70 per cent of the Type 23's displacement, the S90 will carry twice the weaponry.)

They are offering this new design to the Navy. In the wake of the Falklands, a ship which offers twice as much bang for half as much buck looks very attractive to naval planners.

THE KEY TECHNICAL argument between Mr Rawson and Thornycroft Giles is that of speed. Mr Rawson has maintained in public that the broad beamed hull 'will demand 50 to 70 per cent more power to propel it at the same speed' compared to a long, thin hull shape. Thornycroft Giles are currently doing tests to establish of what speeds the S90 will be capable: but, on the experience of the Osprey, they claim that excessive quantities of power will not be needed.

Mr Rawson's most damning argument against the S90 concept has always been that, if the idea is so good, it should have been tried out by someone else. On BBC *Newsnight* recently, Mr Rawson remarked that, if the broad beamed concept was so clever, 'all the other major nations are wrong'. He is now eating his words. A month ago, the US Navy announced that it was to build a new class of super destroyers, the DDG-51 Burke class. Though more than twice as large as the S90, at 8,500 tons full displacement, the Burke class will have a beam length ratio of 7.42 to 1 – virtually the same as the S90. It will have a much greater range than conventional ships, and will be capable of at least 29 knots. The US Navy plans to build at least 60.

If all these factors were not enough to cause Mr Rawson's departure, a looming scandal has ensured his resignation. It concerns Mr Rawson's lengthy battle with Thornycroft Giles. For the past year the firm has been suing British Shipbuilders, who build most of the Navy's ships, for breach of copyright and damages. The full case has yet to be heard, but BS has already admitted to copying lines plans and conducting testing. As British Shipbuilders' counsel put it: 'There is no issue outstanding between the parties. The only question now is damages.' (Court Hearing before the Master of the Rolls, 5 November 1982.)

The case will be extremely damaging not only to British Shipbuilders, but also to the Royal Navy. It has become clear in the course of preliminary hearings that the testing was done with the knowledge of the Navy's Ship Department. There are even suggestions that it was done on the instructions of Ship Department with the intention of pirating Thornycroft Giles's Osprey design.

The final judgment in that case will not come for some months. But is is clear that the case has been an unmitigated disaster for British Shipbuilders and the Navy's Ship Design Department. It was also the final nail in Mr Rawson's coffin. □

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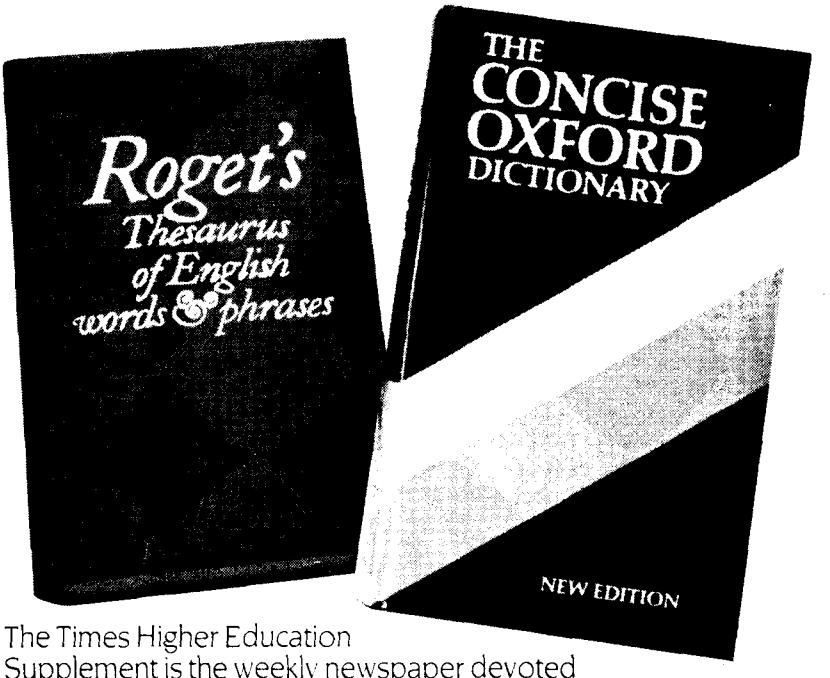

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DIARY

Christopher Price

A depressing visit to my local Housing Department to argue out my 30 or 40 most anguished rehousing cases. The human distress caused by Heseltine's virtual ban on new building four years ago means that all but the comparatively well-off or the very seriously disabled have to wait years for a decent place to live in London. It's hardest on growing families, increasingly fractured by the tension of damp, overcrowding and the dole. A mother and two children squeezed into a one-bed flat. No hope this year – try again next. A family in a so-called 'two bed' flat – with two massive teenage sons, squashed into bunk beds in a boxroom. No hope ever – till the boys grow up and leave. Only a tiny trickle of the ultra genteel, lucky ones ever get a transfer to the green pastures of Bromley in the south. The rest are blocked off from a proper home by the Prime Minister's 'family' policy – gimmicky sales pitches to those who can afford to buy houses, and letting the rest rot in damp flats. London desperately needs more houses, to give its families a few years with a garden.

○

Back at Westminster, we have been sitting up all night on the Police (No 2) Bill – a complete Home Office rewrite, now Thatcher has given orders to capitulate to the professionals. Apart from this, the House of Commons is temporarily dead. Through we go through the motions of asking questions amd making speeches, everyone is waiting for June. If there is a June election, the headlines will be on the legislation which has *failed* to make it – Police, British Telecom, one or two others. The real story, however, which never gets much publicity, is the minor avalanche of legislation which sweeps through all its remaining stages in the Commons and the Lords in the last few days before the Dissolution; quite controversial bills are suddenly declared acceptable by an Opposition which is anxious to begin a period of office without too many loose ends. Data Protection could be a condidate for this collusive treatment, together with a little bill Keith Joseph has just brought in to reverse Lord Scarman's humane definition of an 'overseas student'. It's in these last few days of term that backbenchers can make a nuisance of themselves. I did in 1979 and succeeded in blocking the Consent to Prosecutions Bill, which would have hived off to the DPP dozens of decisions to prosecute that the Attorney General should properly take. But I shall behave this year. I shall be beavering away in Lewisham West, where the super-efficient computers of BBC and ITN have recalculated my 1979 majority, after redistribution, to be exactly 870.

I have another motive for not interfering with this last-minute legislative collusion. I'm part of the plot. It's just possible that the 'Price-McIntosh' Coroners' Juries Bill might get itself signed by the Queen just in time. At the moment coroners can send their faithful policeman-functionaries round the corner to scoop up a few jurors, whenever the need arises. This arcane practice upsets even the Home Office. So they've quietly helped me pilot my bill through the Commons to impose statistically random juries upon these rather less than accountable and often idiosyncratic ancient judical officers. I've now handed over the task of massaging it smoothly through the Lords to my recently ennobled friend (and GLC escapologist) Andrew McIntosh. It would apply everywhere in the realm – except the Queen's Household or the Palace of Westminster. That's why we're not allowed to die in Parliament, if we want a proper inquest. Legally Airey Neave, blown up as he drove out of our car park, died 'on the way to hospital'.

○

The substantial compensation for working in a Royal Palace is that – like the Windmill Theatre – our bars never close as long as Parliament is sitting. They're scattered throughout the building and, until recently, having located them, I thought I'd found the lot. But no. Deep in the labyrinthine bowels of the building there's another one which stays open on Fridays long after the rest have closed and MPs have gone home. It's for other ranks rather than officers, and as an ex-lance bombardier (22348921), I seem to qualify. So as to its exact location, I'm sworn to eternal secrecy.

○

Of all the ministers who depart when the wretched government ends, the one I shall mourn least is Gerard Vaughan, our child psychiatrist Minister of Consumer Affairs, and scourge of CND, Joan Ruddock and the Citizens Advice Bureaux. He's been forced to back down and restore the national CAB grant this year, but he's still putting in a firm of expensive accountants to investigate them. This now seems a standard Tory Pavlovian reaction to Peace – 'If it's CND, put the accountants in'. Cardinal Basil Hume had better weigh his words carefully in future on Bruce Kent and the CND, or he'll have Gerald Vaughan sending in little men from Peat, Marwick and Mitchell to investigate the Church of Rome.

○

I do admire the ingenuity of the National Council of Civil Liberties in persuading the great and the good to discover their true consciences and jump on the anti-Police Bill bandwagon. I see that heading a glittering cast at the NCCL's Caxton Hall rally this coming Monday evening (The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill 1983 – A Threat to Liberty) is Richard du Cann QC, Edward's little brother and one of our most fearsome prosecutors. It would have been nice if threats to liberty had been slightly more prominent in his mind, when successfully prosecuting and convicting my three innocent constituents for killing Maxwell Confait on the evidence of their confessions alone, ten years ago. But prodigal sons are always welcome; and I hope he tells us how we can best amend the Bill.

ROGER WOODS

The fire in the front yard

'It cannot afford to lose in Central America. If it did it would lose everything – and so should we.' – Peter Simple, Daily Telegraph, *on American involvement in El Salvador.*

Nobody doubts the struggle is global,
Central America signals, 'Beware!'
All that is decent, all that is noble
Hangs on the hangmen governing there.

See where two forces cause an upheaval,
This is not time for a neighbourly chat;
Those without shirts are the essence of evil,
Tall-in-the-saddle wears a white hat.

Faced with the threat of something
unpleasant,
Let us be bold in pursuing our ends;
Anyone squeamish in wasting a peasant
Cannot be said to be one of our friends.

What is at stake is not to be doubted,
Strong is the rock on which our faith leans;
Seeing the threat of the right being routed,
God will command us to send the marines.

Aid to our clients cannot be frugal,
When it's a question of stemming the tide;
What a damn shame the President's bugle
Rallies recruits to the opposite side!

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FOREIGN NEWS: EL SALVADOR

Front line view

Barry Cohen interviewed Hector Oqueli, the Salvadoran revolutionary envoy, in London last week

WHILE PRESIDENT REAGAN was receiving his standing ovation in Congress last week for his apocalyptic speech on Central America, Hector Oqueli was visiting London as part of a counter-offensive on behalf of El Salvador's opposition movement. Previously Deputy Foreign Minister in the first Junta formed after the overthrow of General Romero in 1979, Oqueli is now a key member of the FDR/FMLN (Democratic Revolutionary Front/Farabundo-Marti National Liberation Front), uniting the revolutionary groups in El Salvador.

Oqueli believes that El Salvador's particular historical character is widely ignored. 'We are the only Central American country which lacks a Caribbean coastline. So, we escaped the "occupation" of "Mama United" – what you normally call the United Fruit Company. Our people did not feel the direct effects of US domination as they did in such countries as Honduras or Guatemala, or, because of the presence of US Marines, in Panama and Nicaragua. Instead, a local oligarchy developed which has been extremely nationalistic in defending its own interests.'

'Until the early 1970s, Central America had been forgotten by everyone. Even the Cubans were only promoting guerrilla activity in the southern cone of Latin America. But then came the Nicaraguan revolution in 1979 which surprised everyone and changed the whole regional picture. The US had quickly to re-think its policies in Central America.'

'Under Reagan, US policy became more complicated, more intensively ideological. We are now witnessing an open US intervention in which the US is trying to dictate everything to do with economic, social, political and military affairs. It is opposed by organisations ranging from the left to the centre as well as some sectors of the right. For example, the big property owners have resisted proposed agrarian reforms and have only been marginally affected by them. Despite American efforts, the oligarchy is still very much in control of the state functions.'

As the security situation progressively deteriorated, four successive governments between October 1979 and March 1983 have attempted to contain the popular revolt. Last month, under American pressure, the inept Defence Minister, General Garcia, was replaced by General Carlos Vides Casanova.

The importance of El Salvador to US regional strategy is reflected in the quantity of aid pouring into the country. Despite Reagan's highly publicised warnings about the danger of abandoning El Salvador to the guerrillas, the country has received $700 million in military and economic assistance in the past three years.

'The problem for the US is not a matter of quantity, but of quality. The Salvadoran army already possesses all kinds of sophisticated counter-insurgency equipment. But it is forced to rely on demoralised, illiterate teenaged peasants who only join the army to escape malnutrition.'

The US has tried to internationalise the conflict by drawing upon direct support from its allies. 'For some time, Argentine advisers were used, but during the Malvinas conflict, they were officially withdrawn. Now, the Israelis provide arms and have taken over the intelligence role.'

WOULD THE US ever resort to sending its own troops into the conflict? 'This would certainly create a very different scenario. Its invasion in 1965 of the Dominican Republic, which has the advantage of being an island, required 42,000 troops. They would need many more in El Salvador. If Reagan wants to be re-elected, he has to measure the impact of a massive intervention on a sceptical American electorate.

'At the highest policy-making levels, there are serious splits in US thinking which naturally affect the morale of El Salvador's rulers. In a recent speech even the Reagan-appointed ambassador to El Salvador, Deane Hinton, accused El Salvador's generals of constituting a "mafia". He is getting so fed up with the situation that he will probably resign in the near future. I understand he has had an El Salvadoran girlfriend, who may have helped to change his views.'

Oqueli's own party, the National Revolutionary Movement, is a member of the Socialist International, According to Oqueli, the SI unanimously supports his party and, by extension, the El Salvador revolution. Although the SI itself does not provide significant aid, individual member parties raise funds on behalf of the opposition.

'Contrary to US reports, outside support is very small-scale. When the Cubans retired from an active revolutionary role after the death of Che Guevara, indigenous Latin American movements developed their own resources. In El Salvador, $100 million was raised through kidnappings.

In many cases, weapons were acquired from corrupt officers in the armed forces of military regimes like Honduras. Also, around the time of the Nicaraguan insurrection, an efficient black market in arms started to operate in Costa Rica. I don't deny that weapons have been transferred from all Central American countries to El Salvador, but it has been done without the collaboration of those governments.'

The suicide in Managua last month of the leading guerilla commander, Salvador Cayetano Carpio, sent undeniable shock waves throughout the El Salvadoran opposition forces. His death was widely attributed to depression following the supposedly 'sectarian' murder of his second-in-command, Commandant Anna Maria. Oqueli disputes this version.

'Our movement does not finish its internal discussions with a gun battle. We know that a close aide of Carpio **was** involved in Anna Maria's murder. But remember that the recently leaked documents in the *New York Times* on CIA activities contain a special section on methods for dividing opposition forces.' □

UNITED STATES

Conflicts of interest

Claudia Wright investigates an odd affair

Washington

ON 9 MARCH 1978, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Stephen Bryen, then a staff member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, was overheard in a Washington coffee shop offering to provide classified documents to a delegation of visiting Israeli officials. They were in town with Ezer Weizman, then Israel's Defense Minister.

The man who overheard Bryen's conversation was seated ten feet away, unnoticed. He was Michael Saba, an American of Arab background, who recognised Bryen from the period when Saba had been an official and Congressional lobbyist for the National Association of Arab Americans (NAAA). Saba took verbatim notes of what he heard and, the following day, presented an affidavit on Bryen's conversation to officials of the Internal Security Section of the Justice Department. Their first reaction was not to take Saba seriously.

At that time, Bryen was a specialist on the Middle East for the Senate subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian affairs. For several years, Bryen and the two Senators for whom he worked, Clifford Case of New Jersey and Richard Stone of Florida, had been effective in boosting US military assistance to Israel, and blocking arms sales to the Arab states. Bryen's greatest success had been stopping a 1974 Nixon Administration proposal to sell mobile improved Hawk air defence missiles to Jordan. That affair led Pentagon officials to regard Bryen as a source of leaks to the Israeli embassy and they were reluctant, in the years that followed, to provide classified documents that

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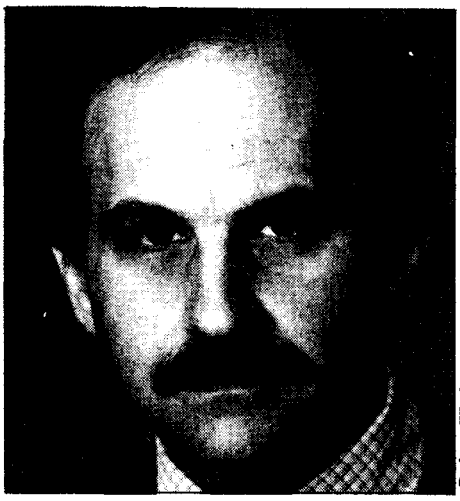

Defense Week

Deputy Assistant Secretary Bryen

Bryen requested for his subcommittee.

When Bryen was overheard in March 1978, the Carter Administration was proposing to sell F15 fighter-bombers to Saudi Arabia. Bryen was one of the Senate staff organising the opposition. Three weeks before the meeting with the Israelis, Bryen had drafted a letter asking the Pentagon to provide Department of Defense photographs of the Saudi base under construction at Tabuk.

THE PENTAGON FEARED that the photographs would be handed over to the Israelis, then used by them to argue that F15s, based at Tabuk, could threaten Israel. According to the affidavit that Saba handed the Justice Department, Bryen told the Israelis that 'this administration is so pigheaded that we have to deal differently'. The 'we' in Bryen's conversation referred to the Israelis and himself; 'they' referred to the Carter Administration. Speaking of the Saudi F15 sale, Bryen reportedly went on: 'They think they have (Senator Frank) Church and have neutralised (Senator Henry) Jackson, but Henry wouldn't make a deal without talking to us about it.' Bryen then made an offer: 'I have the Pentagon document on the bases, which you are welcome to see.' Bryen denies saying this and claims that it is his word against Saba's.

The Saudi airbase documents weren't the only classified materials to which Bryen referred in his conversation. He reportedly mentioned the possibility of transferring US military technology to Israel so that it could fabricate weapons systems independently of US manufacturers or government control. To achieve this, Bryen said: 'Our best bet now would be Erich von Marbod, he's the military sales guy on the deal . . . He looks German but he's with us.' Von Marbod was then director of the Defense Security Assistance Agency, the Pentagon office responsible for foreign arms transfers.

Saba's affidavit launched an investigation by the Justice Department. Saba himself was interrogated by FBI agents and Justice officials, and underwent a Polygraph lie-detector test. Bryen was interviewed in detail by the FBI, but refused to submit to the Polygraph. The agents and attorneys also interviewed Congressional staff, several Senators, and others who knew Bryen. Bryen was supported by the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the ranking Republican member and other Senators. A testimonial arrived at the Justice Department on Bryen's behalf from von Marbod at the Defense Security Assistance Agency.

After nine months, the investigating attorneys recommended to Assistant Attorney General Philip Heymann that a grand jury be empanelled to consider the evidence against Bryen and decide whether to indict him on charges of espionage. But though the investigation dragged on, the case was never brought before a grand jury, and Bryen's Washington attorney, Nathan Lewin, successfully resisted the request of the Justice Department to interview Bryen in detail on the facts in the case. On 22 April this year, in response to a 'freedom of information' request, the Justice Department released 69 pages from the Bryen dossier – which it had previously claimed was 'missing.' 43 are blank, where documents are still being withheld. The dossier, however, reveals that investigators are now satisfied by Saba's affidavit and that other witnesses also testified to Bryen's Israeli contacts.

THE CASE SURFACED briefly again in July 1982, during the Senate Armed Services Committee's review of Richard Perle's nomination as Assistant Secretary of Defense (see *NS* 22 April).The NAAA presented evidence that Perle had already engaged Bryen as a consultant and was planning to give him a formal appointment once he was confirmed himself. This prompted several Senators to query what the investigaton of Bryen had found. Perle was asked about the case at his nomination hearing. He said: 'The allegations were totally unfounded, with the Justice Department dropping its investigaton after concluding that there was no need to carry it further.' In a letter to NAAA, Fred Iklé, the Under Secretary of Defense, defended Bryen and Perle. 'In granting Dr Bryen's appointment,' Iklé wrote on 13 October 1981, 'a thorough examination was made of all pertinent files . . . It is my understanding that Assistant Secretary Perle has answered all Congressional inquiries on this matter that have been directed to him.'

These statements fell short of the full truth, but they successfully mollified the Senate's concerns. According to Senator James Exon (Democrat, Nebraska), he was persuaded to lift his hold on Perle's nomination 'after consultations and assurances initiated by officials in whom I have confidence with regard to security matters'. That was in August 1981. On 19 April 1983, 20 months later, Exon told *NS*: 'I have never been allowed to see all of the information sought (about Bryen) for reasons still never satisfactorily explained. I am continuing to seek access from proper sources.'

Is the Bryen case closed, as Perle suggested in his statement to the Senate? Exon's spokesman, Greg Pallas, says: 'I don't know.' Philip Heymann, the Justice official responsible for the decision on Bryen – now a law professor – says he is '80 per cent or 90 per cent sure the case is closed'. □

SOUTH AFRICA

Afrikaners at bay

Howard Barrell looks forward to three by-elections

Nylstroom

WHEN, IN THEIR DESPERATE evasion of British colonialism, a band of Voortrekkers reached a river about 100 miles north of what is now Pretoria, they believed they had travelled so far up Africa that they must have reached a Nile tributary. So they called the place Nylstroom (which it remains to this day), displaced the local black population and made it a cradle of their particular form of civilisation.

The town's graveyard evinces its white population's bitter courage in pursuit of Afrikaner self-determination. The hundreds of graves of women and children who died in British concentration camps during the Boer War scar the political consciousness of the Van Rensburgs, Strijdoms and other Afrikaner families who control the district.

The town, in the Waterberg constituency, is now at the centre of what could turn out to be South Africa's most bitterly contested white by-election since the apartheid National Party wrested power from an ailing Jan Smuts in 1948. The struggle takes the form of a *broedertwis* (fight among brothers) between three parties claiming proprietary rights to the 'soul of Afrikanerdom'. The single issue is National Party Prime Minster P. W. Botha's new constitutional plan and the extent to which it means power sharing with coloureds (people of mixed race) and Indian South Africans – and so an end to undiluted Afrikaner self-determination.

Two other parliamentary by-elections are also due on 10 May. In Soutpansberg, further to the north (closer to the militant black tide lapping at the banks of the Limpopo River), sitting MP and Manpower Minister Fanie Botha is already having a tough time defending the National Party and his personal role in labour reforms that have given black workers limited trade union rights. His opponent is an old rival, Tom Langley, formerly within the National Party but now among the leading lights of the more right-wing Conservative Party, which broke away in February last year.

The third by-election is in the Jaguar and jacuzzi belt of Pretoria, known as Waterkloof. Here, the major contenders are the ruling National Party (whose candidate is new-breed Afrikaner and well-healed economist Org Marais) and the official white opposition Progressive Federal Party (whose flagbearer is young Afrikaner lawyer and city councillor Tertius Spies). Conventional wisdom presents the battle as ideological – with P. W. Botha and his supporters as reformists, making their first halting ac-

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quaintance with radical realities and fair play and, in the process, coming up against ideologues to their right.

The dust is already being kicked up in the Waterberg Mountains, badly affected by one of the worst droughts this century. Here, the battle has been joined by the National Party, the Conservative Party and the ultra-rightist Herstigte Nasionale Party (Reconstituted National Party). The National Party candidate is Eben Cuyler – whom a local farmer in the Nylstroom pub described to me as a 'stinking rich snob who farms near here'. The Conservative Party is represented by its leader, one-time *dominee* (church minister) and *Broederbond* chairman Dr Andries Treurnicht. He models himself on the former oracle of Afrikanerdom, the assassinated Prime Minister Hendrick Verwoerd, and employs a consciously manipulative oratorical style. Treurnicht represented the seat for Botha's party, until they divorced.

The antediluvian Herstigte Nasionale Party has also put up its leader, Jaap Marais, who broke with Prime Minister John Vorster in 1969, ostensibly over the issue of allowing a New Zealand rugby team, which included a few Maoris, to tour South Africa. For Marais, such a concession to a good rugby season implied the beginning of the end of apartheid, the white man and Christianity in South Africa. He cites Botha's new constitutional plan as vindication of his prophetic vision.

Botha's Minister of Constitutional Affairs, Chris Heunis, has been closeted with his legal draftsmen for weeks, preparing the Bills that will give the new constitutional proposals their statutory form. But the government has already given a fairly good idea of what can be expected. The plan is a peculiar piece of constitutional gerrymandering which totally excludes the country's African majority (who are still supposed to realise their aspirations in the impoverished ethnic 'homelands'), but includes those classified as 'coloured' and 'Indian' in an arrangement which entrenches white control and creates an executive president with dictatorial power (see *NS* 12 Nov 1982).

THE GENESIS OF THE WAR among South Africa's rulers lies in the change, since 1948, in the character of Afrikanerdom, both within its traditional vehicle, the National Party, and the state. When the National Party came to power in 1948, it was an alliance of forces that embraced commercial farmers, certain strata of white workers, the Afrikaans-speaking state bureaucrats and professional elite (whose voice was the secret *Broederbond* organisation), and an aspirant Afrikaner business group.

The 1970s brought recession, strikes and political instability, culminating in the 1976-77 uprisings. The most pressing concern was to stabilise a black working class within 'white South Africa' (as opposed to those millions barricaded in poverty in the 'homeland' slums), give this group more mobility, and bolster a newly-conjured economic animal denoted the 'black middle class' as an ally of capitalism.

Then-Prime Minister John Vorster and his right-hand man, Minister of Information Connie Mulder (with their farming and state bureaucratic power base), were not equal to the task. The 'Muldergate' scandal provided Afrikaans and English financial interests, and their allies within the National Party, with an opportunity to move against them. P. W. Botha's election to the premiership, after Vorster's resignation, represented a victory for this set of business interests.

It was from the defeated partners in the alliance that Dr Treurnicht drew his support in parliament and the constituencies when he broke away, to be joined by Mulder, in February last year. Their departure has, in effect, left the ruling National Party under the domination of the Afrikaner business/military alliance, with an increasing role in the state structure being allocated to their English commercial counterparts. Under the new constitutional proposals, Botha, as probable executive president, will have even greater powers to cement this alliance.

There is no doubting the reality of the fear of the alienated voters of Waterberg. In the words of one white worker, displaced from his home by a recent, senseless government decision: 'Ag, man, this bloody government has become too fat. It's got nothing better to do than to bugger around with the poor people, whether we are whites or kaffirs. I've got nowhere to go.' □

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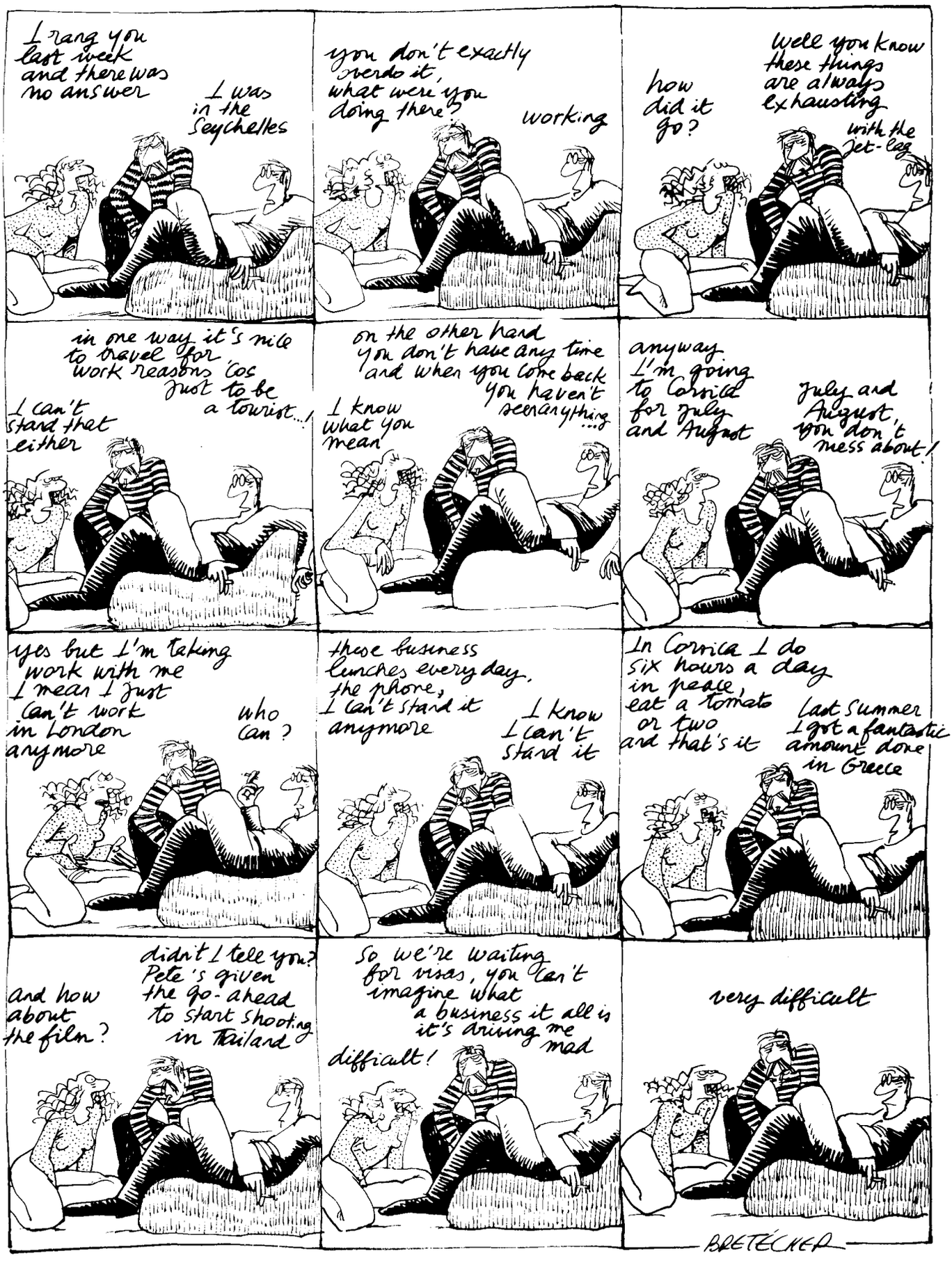
alienation


I rang you last week and there was no answer
I was in the Seychelles
you don't exactly overdo it, what were you doing there?
working
how did it go?
well you know these things are always exhausting
with the jet-lag
in one way it's nice to travel for work reasons 'cos just to be a tourist...
I can't stand that either
on the other hand you don't have any time and when you come back you haven't seen anything...
I know what you mean
anyway I'm going to Corsica for July and August
July and August, you don't mess about!
yes but I'm taking work with me I mean I just can't work in London anymore
who can?
these business lunches every day, the phone, I can't stand it anymore
I know I can't stand it
In Corsica I do six hours a day in peace, eat a tomato or two and that's it
last summer I got a fantastic amount done in Greece
and how about the film?
didn't I tell you? Pete's given the go-ahead to start shooting in Thailand
So we're waiting for visas, you can't imagine what a business it all is it's driving me
difficult!
very difficult
BRETÉCHER

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LETTERS

Architecture for the people

Andrew Saint, London NW5

In response to Stephen Mullin's piece on my book *The Image of the Architect*, Tom Woolley (Letters 22 April) rightly advances the claims of community architecture as something which architects have lamentably neglected, and which needs all the support it can get. But I am loath to be classified among an imaginary band of 'aesthetes' who care nothing about it.

I scarcely mention community architecture in my book for a simple reason. The book is a historical one, and the relatively few pages on post-war architectural practice in Britain aim only to mention trends which have significantly influenced the profession. Despite some brave work by isolated individuals and public architects, the impact made by anything which could be called community architecture has been very limited. Why this is so is plain. It has been hard enough to devise a health service and tinker with a legal system so as to make them even semi-responsive and accountable to their users. But construction is so fundamentally linked to the whole economic system, so dependent upon borrowing and so responsive to the smallest political pressure that the difficulties in controlling its forces on a large scale and in the genuine interests of the community remain enormous, as the history of public housing shows.

All the more reason, therefore, to applaud the efforts of Tom Woolley and others to give this important problem some serious, socialist thought.

Family incomes

Paul Ashton, St Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex

Nick Morris (Letters 22 April) accuses me of making 'errors of fact' when comparing the IFS's and Professor Minford's calculations of in and out-of-work incomes with those of the DHSS's study of unemployed men and of my extrapolations from it. Unfortunately his attempt to correct these 'errors' merely clouds the issues.

Mr Morris maintains that his estimates of replacement rates refers not to households but to 'family units'. With the exception of a few shared households, these two terms are identical (Morris himself uses them interchangeably in his Oct 1982 paper) and thus include spouseless and childless households.

While it is obviously correct that *short-term* replacement ratios are, on average, lower now than in 1978 (though Morris is wrong to include tax refund changes, since the DHSS figures excluded tax rebates), it is incorrect to assume therefore that the proportion of unemployed families with dependent children facing high replacement rates is lower now than the 41 per cent recorded in 1978. One must allow for the fact that (a) the DHSS study was of the flow rather than the stock of unemployed, (b) the study excluded unadmitted black economy earnings and (c) supplementary benefits for families has since increased relative to net earnings. Allowing for these factors, and for the study's comparison dates for earnings and benefits, the proportion of unemployed families with high replacement ratios is likely to be higher now than in 1978.

My purpose in highlighting the large number of unemployed families who would be only marginally better off in work is not to 'mislead' anyone about the 'overall incentive effect', but is merely to present a case for widening the narrow gap between in and out of work incomes for families by increasing child benefits.

China in context

Jonathan Mirsky, London W11

Donald Roy (Letters 22 April) criticised my article (*NS* 15 April) on Chinese illiteracy. He calls it 'revisionist.' I hope so. It was, as I said, intended to counter decades of boasting by Chinese and their 'friends' abroad about the conquest of illiteracy (and female infanticide, prostitution, etc).

As Mr Roy says, China is poor. But no overseas aid? He forgets the Russian decade (although it is true that the Chinese, like all other recipients of all other aid, paid in various ways). He observes, too, that China has been 'encouraged' to spend a good deal on anti-Russian defence. True enough, but is that an excuse? It's simply another of the Party's decisions. At least they've had the good sense to cancel Sea Dart . . . at the very last moment. Mr Roy seems to say that China is not hooked into the world economy, unlike 'democracies' which he chooses to call 'Jekyl and Hyde.' Alas, untrue. Atlantic Richfield, BP, Shell, Mitsubishi and many others are involved in Chinese steel, oil and machine tools. The World Bank and Japan have made huge loans to China and will make more. When Foreign Trade Minister Chen Muhua was here three weeks ago she told me that Peking was longing for big loans from abroad – she specifically mentioned the UK – to pay for over 3,000 upcoming projects.

Why Mr Roy thinks this is all relevant to illiteracy anyway puzzles me. I explained that years of Maoist contempt for education and urban-rural inequalities are the root causes. The real hammer blows for education came in the anti-Rightist drives of the '50s, which purged hundreds of thousands of intellectuals, and then in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The effects of both on students, teachers, schools and learning are well-documented in China, and all Chinese will gloomily tell you about them.

Mr Roy says we should give the Chinese credit for their achievements. We should indeed. It is remarkable how much they have accomplished during the years – about two-thirds of the entire history of the Peoples' Republic – in which, as the Party's own 1981 'Resolution on Certain Historical Questions' concedes, successive governments caused one catastrophe after another.

Views of Ghana

Philip P. Arnold, Counsellor for Public Affairs, United States Embassy, London W1

The United States Government is not engaged in any actions directed against the Provisional National Defenses Council as alleged in Victoria Brittain's article (*NS* 22 April). The German Government has denounced as a forgery the so-called secret report from the German Embassy in Accra produced by the Ghana Government on 31 March in support of its allegations against the US Embassy. Quite apart from the fact that it is a forgery, that document contains serious factual errors. For example, it says the US Ambassador to Ghana met a German dissident three times in Lome in 1982. The US Ambassador has not been in Lome since Rawlings came to power. Nor has the Government of Ghana offered any evidence at all for its absurd claim that the US is hiring hundreds of mercentaries to attack it.

With respect to the February coup attempt, US government records indicate that the passport issued to Roberto Figueroa Dominquez was issued in the US in 1980, before the 31 December 1981 revolution. The US Mission provided standard consular assistance to Dr Antwi's wife, after the arrests of alleged coup plotters at Dr Antwi's house, because she was an American citizen who requested assistance. She then processed her departure from Ghana in the usual manner through government offices.

The US Government has no objection to any agreement Ghana may be able to reach with the International Monetary Fund or with the Volta Aluminium Company, nor to any assistance Ghana may be able to obtain from Libya which does not require Ghana to adopt Libya's anti-American policies.

Ms Brittain is of course entitled to hold whatever views on Ghana she may choose; however, I feel that in the interests of reasonably objective journalism, she should also not choose to omit key facts in presenting her account of the situation. Thus, I was especially dismayed that – whatever credence and value she may place in the official statements of the US and German Embassies in Accra and their respective Governments in Washington and Bonn – she simply chose to omit any mention of these statements and denials.

I believe your readers are entitled to reporting on Ghana which is more accurate and balanced than that exemplified by Ms Brittain's article.

Roads, rails & resources

J. R. Spencer, Selwyn College, Cambridge

As a cyclist I am aghast at Alfred Sherman's bland assertion (Letters, 25 March) that cyclists would be among those to benefit from large-scale rail closures and the redevelopment of the ex-railways as roads. In fact, cycling as a leisure activity is heavily dependent upon the railway network, because trains are the only form of public transport upon which it is possible to convey cycles beyond easy cycling reach of home for the start of a tour. *Cycletouring*, the organ of the Cyclists' Touring Club, seems at times almost to consist of accounts of negotiations with British Rail on the carriage of cycles by train. Far from benefiting from rail closures, cyclists love and need the railways.

Sadly, their love is unrequited. British Rail has recently abolished the facility for sending cycles as passengers' luggage in advance and, as fast as it can afford to do so, is replacing its old rolling-stock, on which cycles could easily be taken as accompanied luggage, with new, upon which it is difficult or impossible to take them. When they treat their friends like this, one wonders if British Rail needs enemies like Mr Sherman.

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Among the 'remarkable common people' of El Salvador – refugee children

John Pilger

Having fun with fear

Salvador
JOAN DIDION *Chatto* £6.95 & £2.95
Tim Page's Nam
TIM PAGE *Thames & Hudson* £7.95

I HELPED make Mexico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National Bank boys to collect revenue in. I helped purify Nicaragua . . . I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for American fruit companies . . .
– *Major-General Smedley Butler, US Marines*

Our enemy is Vietnam; our friends are the United States.
– *Nam Phann, Khmer Rouge base commander, also known as 'The Butcher'.*

The settings of the books under review, Central America and Indochina, are two regions of the world where an ideology seldom identified as Americanism has caused incalculable suffering among impoverished peoples. In Indochina, as in the United Nations, Reagan's ideologues support the Khmer Rouge whose barbarism is well documented. They do this in order to pursue a 'policy' of revenge against the Vietnamese and a monomaniacal vision of the Russians. In Central America, the same ideologues are at work; living ghosts from Vietnam, CIA cashiers, diplomats, 'land reform experts', Green Beret 'trainers' *et al* seek in broad daylight to overthrow the government of Nicaragua and to shore up the latest dynasty of dictatorships which murder their own civilian people, such as in Guatemala and El Salvador. They do this with the public approval of a President who last week spoke of America's 'moral duty' in the region. Moreover, they are getting away with it; indeed, the men in the Kremlin, as they measure their next move in Poland or Afghanistan, must view with envy the alacrity with which the men in Washington are able to move in such small 'soft option' lands.

That is *not*, one must hasten to say, an 'anti-American' statement; the mindless McCarthyite term having lately returned to fashion. Indeed, the apocalyptic obsession of Reagan and others before him has been usually exported without the knowledge and approval of most of the American people, many of whom would oppose its imposition if only they knew that such criminal stupidity ran counter to the interests of their own nation. In **Salvador** Joan Didion *seems* to be making this point; elsewhere in the rush of her stylish prose such basic truths, which her readers need to know, are missing. As a journalist I can understand that perhaps only an exceptional novelist can encapsulate an epoch; and in this respect *Salvador* is a lost opportunity. Regardless of the current media attention, or perhaps because of it, the historical perspective of what Washington is up to in Central America remains blurred; and the timing of a book of the power of, say, Mailer's *Armies of the Night* is right. Without such a work, the American intelligentsia may not even wring its hands over Central America, let alone mobilise to try to stop the crimes of its government.

Joan Didion's book is certainly compulsive reading as a portrait of the macabre. But as it progresses the doubts and questions pile up. What is Joan Didion for? What is she against? Indeed, why did she go to El Salvador? If, as I read in the *Washington Post*, the book is merely about the 'mechanism of fear' and how it worked on the author herself, then perhaps it succeeds within those confined limits: that is, as an indulgent literary exercise in atmospherics and little else. My difficulty is that, having been to El Salvador and to many places like it, I have minimal interest in The Perils of Joan who, having flown through the night from LA and having left her water-purifying tablets behind, becomes the recipient of myriad, menacing Latin stares and the captive, it would appear, of the American embassy and of Reagan's man with the death squads. His name is Deane Hinton and, according to the author, he gives 'the sense of a man determined not to crack'.

Alas, my negative thoughts persist when I read that Joan has described her El Salvador sojourn as 'a total immersion experience'. In Marin Country, California, HQ of the Me Generation, a Total Immersion Experience might well be performed, if not in El Salvador then in a hot tub with company; and the suspicion nags that this book is the Me Generation having one more vicarious fling. And I would not so much mind that had the author taken off her shades just long enough during her two weeks' Total Immersion Experience to observe the lives of the ordinary people of El Salvador and their epic, melancholy struggle to defend themselves against Reagan, Deane Hinton, goons, malnutrition, malaria, and the economic legacies of the likes of Major-General Smedley Butler and his Marines.

If the author went to the trouble of trembling at road-blocks, why did she not venture into the heart of El Salvador – into the villages where people's courage and tenacity to survive ought to be humbling or inspiring to an outsider from Consumerworld. Some

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of the bravest people I have met live in El Salvador; but Joan Didion gives us no sense of their *fight*. She appreciates symbols, but I could not find in her book symbols such as that of the words on a wall of a funeral parlour in Conception St., San Salvador. The words say, 'To hold down people forever is like putting a hand up to the sun'; and all attempts to erase them have failed. There are many such symbols in El Salvador: consider the poetic heroism of those who apply and restore them. If these remarkable common people exist at all in her book, they are merged with all the other demons in her *noche obscura*, in which *everybody* is sinister. She sees El Salvador as so many others saw Vietnam – as a war, a 'domino', a 'nightmare' – almost always as a threat to *themselves*, almost never as a community of human beings.

What is also puzzling is that, having brilliantly mocked El Salvador's electoral statistics, the author descends into two banal pages of trying to put us on side with good old Ambassador Deane Hinton who 'believes in doing what he can'. Out of a long lunch with Deane comes the author's apparent solution ' . . . in which American interests would seem to have been best served by attempting to isolate the "out-and-out Marxists" while supporting the "broad-based coalition of moderate and centre-left groups", discouraging one by encouraging the other . . .'

The imperial assumption, the arrogance that Deane and his boss Ronnie have a right to 'discourage' and 'encourage' in El Salvador, is never really challenged. Nor does she explain a 'Marxist' in El Salvador; nor an '*out-and-out* Marxist' in El Salvador; nor the meaning of lazy jargon such as 'moderate' and 'centre-left' in a nation of heaving chests and vitamin-starved faces and 200 'disappearances' a week, courtesy of 'the authorities'. Did the author talk to the Slum Dwellers' Association or to the Christian Peasants' Association, or to any of the numerous groups which comprise the resistance and have done so, like the two mentioned, for half a century? Assaulting the liberal emotions, turning the centre-left stomach, pricking the conservative conscience, having fun with fear, will no longer do. Those who wrung their hands over the 'nightmare' in Vietnam did all that; and the nightmare went on.

For Tim Page, psychedelic Sixties war photographer, Vietnam was also a Total Immersion Experience. In **Tim Page's Nam** he is vividly honest about this; it was, he says, 'our adventure sandbox'. There are 94 of Page's photographs, many of them of the helicopters he apparently loved and of other toys and their minders from the war of rampant technology against people. His portraits are strangely opaque. There is a section called 'Sufferings', as if suffering was somehow carried on in isolation from all the fun. Tim Page lost part of his head in the war and admirably offers himself no pity: 'It was the Vietnamese who really copped it,' he writes; '[they] were generally fucked over *in just about* every way man can contrive.'

And they still are. □

POETRY
James Campbell

Great Scot

Whaur Extremes Meet: The Poetry of Hugh MacDiarmid, 1920-1934
CATHERINE KERRIGAN *Mercat Press* £12.50

Yeats, Eliot, Pound *and* MacDiarmid? The answer to the question in Scotland is ever more likely to be yes, though universal consent to an increased cabinet of modernist chiefs is taking longer. Comparisons with Pound are irresistible: a body of exquisite early lyrics followed by a long work which settled his reputation; endless idiosyncratic prose writings; translations; then the later production of poems which embody half-digested fragments of other cultures, extremely doubtful political affiliations and, not least, consistent encouragement of younger writers. Paradoxically, however, it is MacDiarmid's most heroic achievement which prevents him gaining wider acceptance: the almost single-handed restoration of a debased literary tradition, a task which involved (and only for a start) the liberation of 'the whole unrealised genius of the Scots vernacular'. This meant fashioning it as a medium suitable for the poetic expression of a modernist sensibility, which in turn could be done only by actually writing poems and attempting to lay the foundations of a modern Scots tradition.

The result was a qualified success. MacDiarmid's early Scots lyrics are considered by many to be the best poetry to have emanated not only from this phenomenally prolific 'volcano', but from Scotland in the present century: poems such as 'The Watergaw', 'Empty Vessel', 'Crowdieknowe' and 'Wheesht' Wheesht' are available in the *Complete Poems*, but they really should be in print in a separate volume. His first long poem, *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle* (1926), is still without peer.

Nor is it likely to have one. The flaw in this monumental effort is that its author was in more than one sense 'a minority o' ane'. No one can resolve the conundrum of a splendid literary oeuvre in a language which is merely literary. Even if there are Scots speakers who have so far evaded the merciless laws of the Global Village, they do not speak the Scots MacDiarmid wrote in, which is a synthetic brand, concocted mainly from the pages of a dictionary. (The modern poet whose language comes closest to a spoken Scots is the late Robert Garioch.) All the more remarkable is the authentic feel of his best poetry, and his control of the idiom in which it is written.

It has become difficult in Scotland to talk of literature, even culture generally, without bringing him in. There seems to be a line of poetry or an aphorism or a gesture which anticipates every doubt and contradiction.

'Bravo!'
GRAHAM GREENE

Stephen Vizinczey
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BRIGID BROPHY

'A marvellous story, written by a master.'
TERRY COLEMAN,
The Guardian

'A very funny and serious book ... the author's English is timeless, elaborate, musical ... the narrative is packed with aphorisms ... tempo, twists, humour and horror speed up ... a crescendo of treachery, delay and despoliation that makes "Bleak House" look like a teaparty ... Someone urges Mark to read Balzac ... But Mark, with his monomaniac quest, his passion for money, his lone stand against the world, is already a character in a novel by Balzac, as are his enemies, powered by greed and anarchic individualism.'
VICTORIA GLENDINNING,
The Sunday Times

Hamish Hamilton £8.95

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Catherine Kerrigan's book is among the first snows of what is sure to be a heavy fall. Its chief merit lies in revealing the range and complexity of MacDiarmid's influences, and in painstakingly sorting them out from the jungle of his poetry. *Whaur Extremes Meet* contains separate chapters on A. R. Orage, C. M. Doughty, Nietzsche, Spengler and the Russian philosopher Soloviev, among others, with sometimes only a token mention of MacDiarmid along the way. The trouble with this approach, which derives from the study's earlier life as a doctoral thesis, is that while readers must be impressed by MacDiarmid's eclecticism, a plain description of these thinkers' ideas does nothing to inspire them. Sometimes Ms Kerrigan is merely riffling through the poet's library: 'Like Spengler, Soloviev's understanding of history rested on Hegel's dialectic, a source these writers shared with Marx.'

Each of MacDiarmid's major works in the period under review is subjected to a rather pedestrian analysis which again betrays the study's origins. MacDiarmid's work does not yield to a mere reading – even such a well-informed one as this – but requires the reader to enter the poet's personality and share his imagination. Catherine Kerrigan is content, too often, to take him at face value, as when, for example, it comes to discussing his more banal political verse (MacDiarmid re-joined the Communist Party after Hungary in 1956) or, more importantly, this:

> What maitters't wha we kill
> To lessen that foulest murder that deprives
> Maist men o' real lives?

A full response to MacDiarmid must be more whole-hearted than Ms Kerrigan's feeble apology for the above lines from 'First Hymn to Lenin': 'It is perhaps made more understandable by the revolutionary temper of those times when mass unemployment, the means test and growing police brutality pushed the British working class to the limits.' MacDiarmid demands bafflement and disgust in equal measure with love and esteem, but not apology. □

Rivals the best of Stephen King

FEVRE DREAM

George R R Martin

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FEMINISM
Harriett Gilbert

Tidying up

Feminist Theories
ed. DALE SPENDER *Women's Press* £6.95

Strength, it is true, can give an impression of tidiness (a strong individual, society or movement contains its complexities by centripetal force), but tidiness has never been a substitute for strength. In theory, Dale Spender agrees. In an editorial epilogue to these studies of 21 feminist theorists, she makes the following comment:

> These theories may begin at different points but because they converge to some extent, because they share a set of assumptions about women's oppression, they reflect *diversity*, rather than *division* (my emphases).

In practice, Spender is less relaxed about 'diversity' – if not among the dead, then the living. Her editorial whip can be felt, more or less sharply, throughout the book.

Her instructions to contributors must have gone something like this: having given a brief biography and explained the subject's theoretical arguments, show how the latter have been suppressed by patriarchal censorship. This, in essence, was the structure of her own book, *Women of Ideas* (1982). There, it succeeded – was useful, attractive and interesting. Here, its imposition has led to a lot of unreadable rigidity.

It is not, I imagine, that the writers concerned disagree with Spender's analysis (otherwise, they would scarcely have consented to contribute), but that they might have been happier with the freedom to expand or contract their vision in line with their own or their subjects' demands. At times, their constraints make both them and us glassy-eyed – as 'biography', 'theory' and 'denunciation of patriarchal censorship' are plodded through with a great deal more duty than enthusiasm.

Mercifully, there are rebellions – even if some are quickly put down. In her study of Harriet Martineau, Gaby Weiner suggests the following as reasons for her subject's long-time neglect:

> She does not fit the female role cast by history, i.e. she was neither a wife, mother or mistress; neither does she fit the male role cast by history in the way that perhaps some eminent women did (for instance, Queen Victoria who held public office) . . . Harriet Martineau was an interesting and knowledgeable political economist. However she had no chance of entering politics, no patron or other means of financial support, and so she made use of a practical rather than theoretical approach to promote political understanding.

At once, there pounces an Editor's Note:

> One could argue simply that her theories were not those of men and therefore were deemed not to exist: I see Harriet Martineau as an intensely theoretical person – who grasped the intellectual principles of the problems she tackled and was able to translate them into accessible forms.

But Weiner has denied neither statement. She is merely exploring from a different direction (and perhaps with different emphases) the reasons for women's 'silencing'. Such editorial paranoia is upsetting.

It repeats itself during Weiner's study of Australian Vida Goldstein. Here, Weiner writes, 'A probable explanation for her non-inclusion in historical bibliographies of women's achievements is that, in recent years, much of the historical work on feminist analysis and politics has focused on European and American developments.' Immediately, Spender intrudes with, 'I would of course advance additional reasons for Goldstein's disappearance in a country where men completely dominate the political institutions they have created.' No doubt – but the subject under discussion was not Goldstein's 'disappearance' in general, but her exclusion from *feminist* history and biography.

Enough of the rebellions are successful, however, to save the book from its editor. Renate Duelli-Klein getting carried away by her passion for Hedwig Dohm ('the more I read by her and about her the more I want to know!'); Alix Kates Shulman leaping to defend Emma Goldman's anarchist standpoint; Mary Evans turning inside-out the accepted beliefs about Simone de Beauvoir – here, and in a few other places, the book brings feminism alive. The experience, feelings and thoughts of women from as long ago as 1670 become part and parcel of our own. None of the women written about is merely 'good for her age'. The sexual politics of Aphra Behn; the wit of Mary Astell; Matilda Joslyn Gage's analytical intelligence; Christabel Pankhurst's political acumen – all are relevant today.

As Spender allows, their viewpoints, priorities and strategies were not identical. Pankhurst (adamant that women must fight both *for* and *by* themselves) had this to say against subsuming suffragism into the socialist struggle:

> One gathers that some day, when the socialists are in power and have nothing better to do, they will give women votes as a finishing touch to their arrangements.

While Emma Goldman thought that the vote was a joke:

> To assume that (women) would succeed in purifying something which is not susceptible of purification is to credit her with supernatural powers.

What they share is an awareness of women's oppression, and the joint belief that they should, and could, do something to help remove it. Despite my reservations about her as an editor, Spender is to be thanked for her work (not only here, but in her own writing, lecturing and teaching) of releasing these dead sisters' voices. How much more powerful is their complex of intelligence, wit, perception and imagination than some neat, little package of 'approved' thought. □

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The Modern American Novel

MALCOLM BRADBURY *Oxford* £9.95

A critical record, in a mere 186 pages, 'of the achievement of American fiction since the turning-point of the 1890s', Malcolm Bradbury's book resembles, at first glance, a literary equivalent of those whirlwind tours that promise the delights of 12 capitals in seven days. If this is page 70, it must be Scott Fitzgerald . . . . Unfair comment, of course. The book should be judged for what it is: a compact introduction for rookie undergraduates.

Given the incidence of bibliophobia on our campuses, the book had to be, above all, brief and comprehensive. Depth is, therefore, a necessary victim. Nor is comprehensiveness taken so far as to embrace writers who do not fit into the academically-conceived tradition of 'the Modern American Novel'. There are no more than fleeting references to such notables as William Styron, Gore Vidal, and Flannery O'Connor, who, for various reasons, rarely appear on syllabuses. E. L. Doctorow, John Irving and Don DeLillo, having emerged too recently yet to be set authors, receive similar treatment. And there is no room whatsoever for even the leading practitioners of that distinctively American form, the private-eye novel. Gumshoes aren't taught.

To an American Studies veteran, the book comes across as the lightly-fleshed skeleton of everybody's Mod. Am. Lit. course. There are no surprises. Current orthodoxies – which Bradbury has played no small part in shaping – are faithfully, albeit sketchily, transmitted: expected names (from Stephen Crane and Frank Norris to Saul Bellow and Thomas Pynchon), expected observations. It is, of course, exactly the primer most students of the subject will want. The trouble is that many are likely to take the book as the last word instead of the first.

David Montrose

Heresies: Resist Much, Obey Little

KEN COATES *Spokesman* £3.50

We are all heretics now – or at least, all decent Marxists are heretics, since the orthodoxies (yesterday's heresies, many of them) have gone remarkably stale. Only because heresy is once again the norm, as it was after 1956, do Ken Coates's ideas seem rather less shocking than the title suggests. For during the 1970s, when Leninist and Trotskyist dogmas enjoyed a mini-revival on the revolutionary left, Ken was arguing away for a socialism which was as critical of such classical simplicities as it was resolutely opposed to Stalinism. And he was putting the case with a historical knowledge of international Communism which is all too unusual on the British Left.

This is a book to dip into, focusing contemporary issues through a range of historical and literary arguments. One of the sources of its author's wisdom is that he was one of the few who continued to see, throughout the Seventies, the nuclear frame in which our politics are contained. For Coates this is why revolution must be 'a long tug o' war' rather than a 'day of reckoning'; why social advance depends so much on international actions and commitments.

These short essays show how closely Coates has parallelled the themes of E. P. Thompson. They bring us one of our live wires at work, and help to explain why Coates, together with Thompson, played a key role in launching that crucial initiative, END. A new Euro-politics of the Left is still far from fruition, but Coates will have played a part in bringing about a much-needed reorientation.

Martin Shaw

Stephen Vizinczey
An Innocent Millionaire

the new bestseller by the author of
In Praise of Older Women

'shows where the true values lie – not in wealth or the rule of law but in that as yet inviolate sector where a man and woman make love . . . a humour more mature than that of Wodehouse . . . or even Waugh . . . I was entertained but also deeply moved: here is a novel set bang in the middle of our decadent, polluted, corrupt world that, in some curious way, breathes a kind of desperate hope.'
ANTHONY BURGESS, *Punch*

'one man's struggle *contra mundum*. You passionately want Niven to get and to keep both his gold and the evil chemical company chairman's lovely bride . . . you're pierced first with distress, then with glee . . . you wouldn't mind (it) going on even longer.'
VALENTINE CUNNINGHAM, *The Observer*

'anyone can enjoy An Innocent Millionaire as a picaresque, exotic-locations thriller. The bonus is that it's also a fable of love, greed and modern society, peopled by rounded, cussed characters. Epigrams ignite with firecracker prodigality.'
SHAUN USHER, *Daily Mail*

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DAVID HUGHES, *Mail on Sunday*

Hamish Hamilton £8.95

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FICTION
Angela McRobbie

Sign language

Duluth
GORE VIDAL *Heinemann* £7.95

Just imagine what Derrida might do with *Dallas*. Consider for a moment what might be Gore Vidal's relationship to each of these, dare I say it, signifiers. *Duluth* ('Love It Or Loathe It, You Can Never Leave It Or Lose It') could well be seen as an answer. Both Vidal and Barthes before him have commented on the practice of summarising a text as a kind of re-writing: not a claim most critics in their modesty would make. In any case, *Duluth* almost denies the possibility of its own summary. I mention Barthes because he makes a fleeting guest appearance in the closing pages of the book in the guise of a French CIA mole responsible for banking modern literary classics into a giant word-processing system. I should also say from the start that I find this book one of the most brilliant, most radical and most subversive pieces of writing to emerge from America in recent years.

Its view of America focuses on the private obsessions and fantasies which, in Vidal's view, have come to motor the whole political machinery. Duluth is a fine example. It has of course no real or authentic existence but is precisely the sum of, in this case, the fictions Vidal weaves around it. There is *Duluth* the new television series, there is that *Duluth* described by pulp novelist Rosemary Klein Kantor, who also depends on a word processor for her scripts, and finally there is the meta-version provided by the author himself. *Duluth*'s characters are suspended somewhere between the necessity for each of these narratives to move, and their own personal, media-inspired fantasies. Its police chief has mastered perfectly those small gestures which, through the TV cop show, have come to signify 'policemanliness'. That is to say he holds his telephone between ear and shoulder and squints exactly like Colombo, Kojak, Starsky or whoever. Duluth's leading policewoman fictionalises herself into historical romances when she gets scared, but manages to transform herself into a female Dirty Harry when it comes to strip-searching 'illegal aliens'. So much for the police department. Not surprisingly it has close connections with the political and criminal infrastructure of the town.

Let us not forget the spaceship. It's been parked in a range of beauty spots in and around Duluth. Its whereabouts can be controlled by police chief and would-be mayor, but its occupants are still a mystery, although it's agreed they are almost definitely either 'illegal aliens' or Russians. Actually they are a bug-like species with strongly humanist values, and they seem to be capable of post-nuclear survival. They are even willing to open up their home as a tourist attraction, a kind of stately spaceship, but when that doesn't make enough money they shut their doors to humanity as we know it. Quite apart from the political manoeuvring, everyday life in Duluth proceeds with all the spice of an upmarket soap opera. Its women move easily from one romantic plot (scripted by Kantor) to another. Sometimes they even become writers themselves. But, as readers or as writers, they all want the same thing: they want to know what happened next, how it ended. And Vidal lets none of us down in this respect. We do indeed find out who 'The Dude' is, we see some notion of justice prevail when a new black mayor is elected (Big John, a one-time cocaine dealer gone straight), and we even find out who killed Betty Grable.

Vidal has always engaged with the excesses of mass culture, with soft porn, soap opera, sex 'n' violence, and rough humour. It might even be said that his status as a serious writer has suffered from this very American addiction. (Everyone in Duluth is addicted to something.) He is also a vengeful writer, one who has closely observed the marginalisation of the radical critic in his own country by the New Right, and is compelled to hit back. Denounced by the pro-family lobby, the anti-ERA campaigners and the 'fag-haters', and bereft of the support of a Left culture (he once claimed there was no Left in America), Vidal's is a lonely voice. No wonder he responds so ambiguously to the 'death of the author' structuralists, who would also write him out of the picture. *Duluth*, the novel, is a nasty, demented reply to both. It's a ruthless account of a population stupefied by its own projected and desired self-image – a self-image drawn from those sub-literary genres which grace our screens. It's a fearful account because it shows how this white, middle-class section of the community and those non-stop visuals together can invade and win over the hearts and minds of those groups and classes who might just otherwise have represented an alternative.

And to those who tell him that all words and all language are prescribed and that you don't write it, it writes you, then, god-damm-it, Vidal will lay down his pen or at least he will pass over his word-processor to somebody else – allowing her, notionally, the last word. It's up to bug-woman Tricia vengefully to consign Duluth to the past tense. So be it, except that, though Vidal may cynically and wittily preside over this social removal, he won't willingly write himself out of history or culture altogether. He is not a man prone to sentiment, but I do think he feels and he certainly continues to signify. □

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P. J. Kavanagh

Dark dawn

God, grant good manners and sobriety
To one who fears he is going to sit all day,
Your gift to him useless, while he endures the knock,
Reproachful behind one eyeball, of last night's whisky.
For splendour nor forgiveness does he ask –
The words come out of the darkness before daybreak –
Only, sober to be as he is full glass in hand,
Passably kind to people he cannot stand.
Not for a salve or for anyone else's sake
He asks for a kit of manners, a mask
For what he feels increasingly, dislike.

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THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

Force of feeling

Twelfth Night
SHAKESPEARE *Stratford*
The Taming of the Shrew
SHAKESPEARE *Barbican*
The Roaring Girl
MIDDLETON and DEKKER *Barbican*
The Body
NICK DARKE *Pit*

Helen Mirren: a splendid shiny-faced swagger

For years its admirers have tried to define the RSC's house-style, coming up with such stabs in the dark as 'cool, intellectual, rather witty, concentrating more on meaning than emotion', 'anti-heroic, anti-authoritarian, anti-illusionist', 'discovering the character from the rhythm and the rhythm from the character, a circular process demanding sensitivity, intelligence and damned hard work', and 'the knack of finding 15 different meanings in five lines'. But it takes only the opening of a new season to expose the insufficiency of any or even all of these. In the main theatre in Stratford there's a modest demonstration of the company's ability to penetrate to (or near) the emotional essence of a well-known text, while in the main London one there is an example of its weakness for camouflaging that essence in inventive razmataz. Here we have a Jacobean play transformed into something akin to an anthropological treatise by a mass of social detail, here another stripped bare of everything except the cast, and here, believe it or not, a gallumphing farce about the H-bomb. Perhaps the RSC's house-style is that it doesn't have a house-style.

The surprising thing about **Twelfth Night,** given its one-time reputation as Shakespeare's 'happiest' comedy, is the violence with which the characters often speak of their feelings; and John Caird's production, Byronically set under or beside cliff, columns, a wizened tree and a sea unusually prone to tempest, catches this turbulence and turmoil very well. An Orsino who is less droopy musicophage than love-stricken boy isn't perhaps so extraordinary, though few can have been so restless, so fidgety, so maddened by Olivia's offishness, and (hence) so likely to take revenge on her and the supposedly treacherous Viola, than Miles Anderson manages to be. A Malvolio who is already so enslaved by fantasies of bettering himself that a seemingly encouraging letter leaves him ecstatically gobbling, jabbering, whispering, weeping – well, that degree of intensity is rather more unusual, both in itself and in its effects. It means that Emrys James, whose very persuasive interpretation this is, can end by brokenly bowing to his persecutors, hobbling offstage, then howling out his last line, 'I'll be revenged on the whole pack of you', as if he has been emotionally crucified rather than merely humiliated. Add Zoe Wanamaker as a Viola concealing powerful yearnings beneath a wan clown-face, a mean and malicious Feste from Richard O'Callaghan and, in John Thaw, an unwontedly spry Toby Belch much more than averagely in love with Maria, and we've an evening that achieves indisputable lift-off.

The Shrew has long proved an embarrassment to right-minded directors and performers; and their most effective refuge has been to propagate the notion that Petruchio is less MCP than one-man Esalen Institute, himself finding love by imaginatively instructing Katharina in the reality of her emotions. It's a reading that clearly attracts Barry Kyle too, given the smiles of consent he permits Sinead Cusack to flash at Alun Armstrong and the wary delight Armstrong radiates back. But all this comes awfully late in the evening, by which time he's been satisfactorily established as a warty predator and she as the pale, ravaged victim of both him and her own boiling resentment. Moreover, these and any other emotional truths are all but swamped by the sort of farcical touches that suggest the director doesn't altogether trust either the play or his own interpretation: ludicrous costumes, a pool for shrew and wooer to fall in, silly walks, a bicycle-made-for-four, and much more. This is, I concede, the sort of show that appeals to audiences more than to critics; but I felt paradoxically cheated by its abundance, especially when I caught glimpses of the interestingly evolving Katharina Ms Cusack was almost able to offer.

Kyle's second foray into the history of women, or of our attitudes to women, is **The Roaring Girl,** whose protagonist wears breeches, smokes a pipe, and utterly confounds boorish mankind with her guile, courage, selflessness and sword. T. S. Eliot acclaimed Moll Cutpurse as a 'real – perpetually real – and human figure'; but, although Helen Mirren plays her with eloquence, bravado and a splendid shiny-faced swagger, the character doesn't seem a lot more three-dimensional than the kind of idealised tomboy who, in another age and art-form, boldly crusades for good from her

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by Robert Plant

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base in the school dorm. Still, Kyle fills the stage with period documentation – shops and stalls, wharfside hoists and crates, prostitutes and a legless beggar, prisoners groping through a ground-level grille, a beau vomiting from an upper window – and this injects a surprising degree of reality into parts of the play Eliot thought hackneyed and stale. Old stories of heavy fathers and marital misunderstandings become revealing looks at a society uncertainly coping with new insecurities: about the place of women, about the relationship of the sexes, about the conflict of the generations, about caste and class. At times it could almost be now.

Ms Mirren, trim, sparky, but finally very forceful indeed, is also to be found at the Pit, playing opposite Michael Gambon's grizzled sugar-daddy in the stark production of *Antony and Cleopatra* I reviewed at Stratford last autumn. And at the same address there's a blackish farce on nuclear themes, which is so idiotic in its earlier stages that it's impossible to do more than shrug when it ventures, supposedly menacingly, from comic Mummerzet into an American airbase. To risk a final, cautious generalisation: most RSC productions are long because they're carefully spoken and packed with pointed business; this is long because it's long. □

TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Waffles

HOW TYPICAL of television that the same week should produce a one-minute interview with Fats Domino (**Entertainment USA,** BBC-2), but a 40-minute one with Meryl Streep (**Guardian Lecture,** BBC-2). Fats, one of the masters of modern music, had nothing to add to the achievement of 35 years. Streep had everything to take away from a rather shorter one. After she had said the terrifically sensible things actors always say to muffle bursting egos, members of the audience changed the subject: 'What's Dustin Hoffmann like?', 'What's Robert de Niro like?' Miss Streep looked pained. However much actors pine to appear 'in their own right', every time they do so they make the world a little bit smaller for the rest of us, enlarging it for themselves, of course, in the way of fees, commercials, voice-overs and other celebrity work.

A similar performance to that of Miss Streep has been that of Jane Seymour doing her ad for soap. 'They say *ro*-mance is coming back into style', simpers the starlet seven years too late, 'I say it never went out. Le Slippery-Stuff says it too. It says it softly. It says it subtly. Just like me.' Jane, Meryl, you're about as subtle as a creamed egg.

Do we imagine we are above such creamy come-ons for cat-food and waffles, films and soap? If we do, we jest. We are being processed and packaged exactly like catfood and delivered with our tongues hanging out to the nearest outlet, if not deposited directly in the bank account of the company. We aren't deciding not to do anything. We're a percentage, the far side of a foregone equation. It's as simple as Robo-Chef! After all, the Olivetti chose the bloody Olivetti! And everyone who doesn't use one of these new abrasive face-scrubs that looks like a butch French mustard is walking round with a layer of dead skin on his face.

The *Time Out* critic thought William Trevor an eccentric choice for **The South Bank Show** (ITV). How about Gene Hackman? It's only strange until you realise that Hackman also has a film coming out soon and the studio needs all the unpaid PR it can get. 'First of all I ask myself how I am like a character', revealed this method actor, who now looks exactly like Rod Steiger, another one, 'then I tend to do it almost all internally.' OK, Gene, but what's in it for me? In support of Hackman, it has to be said that an early influence was Errol Flynn. He didn't seem that happy to be working on the new Roeg picture. 'Look at this tropical paradise. I've got the day off. I'm being paid. I should be enjoying myself. But is this what a grown man does at 52?' This was the macho-interview, something to do with the part he's in, I dare say. The twittering of tropical birds accompanied his soul-searching.

I suppose it helps a film in the short term if an actor is seen around, but surely it diminishes it in the long run by devaluing the faces chosen to appear in it. I can't work out why there isn't a taboo on it yet. Greed knows no cool. If there was a taboo, it could be lifted when a performer retired. The child stars in **Hollywood's Children** (BBC-2) looked back on their screen selves as at different people in another world. Some of them couldn't remember making their films. Baby Peggy, a star at 20 months, explained the popularity of her little lost girls: 'We're an immigrant nation. I think we want to be taken in and told we belong.' She spoke for many of these ordinary folks once adored by the world: 'When I was adolescent I wasn't the same person. It was as though you were a senior citizen, or terribly injured in an accident. Just as you were beginning to be a person you found you didn't exist. At 18 I wasn't ready to die.' The whole flickering lost world reminded me of Wordsworth's 'Immortality Ode'.

It seems that, during the Depression, children were turned into breadwinners by greedy or desperate parents who later took their little darlings for all they were worth. 'There was a whole stable of child stars', said Jackie Cougan, star of *The Kid,* whose court case was a precedent that put a safeguard on the earnings of under-age actors. His metaphor was an apt one. Of 50,000 runners, only about 50 ever reached the lens-gate. The rest supported an army of voice and movement instructors imported from the East. Cougan, No. 1 box office in 1922, was making $500,000 p.a.

The current Depression has seen another boom in mini-stars and the foremost school for them is Anna Scher's Children's Theatre in Islington, for which there is a four-year waiting list. People put their kids down for Anna's at birth now, with Eton as second choice. **Acting with Anna** (C4) is the spin-off, a highly amusing weekly work-out with the perkiest of her brood. These kids improvise faster than Charlie Parker.

Diana Rigg, appearing on **Wogan** (BBC-1), pointed out the continuing American tendency to panic at the sight or sound of failure: 'It's a taboo, like death. They don't think it's funny the way we do.' You felt Miss Rigg would never be turning white at Oscar time the way Americans do. She probably turned red this year if she had any sense. She had a couple of flops recently but didn't seem to mind. 'No, the misery lasts about as long as it takes to get home.' Les Dawson came on next and warmed my heart with his brilliant one-line satire on the American way of life: 'This here's the barbecue-area', he chew-smiled. 'Don't ya love it? (Smile-smile.) How's about the glazed floor tiles? (Smile.) Have a nice day!' □

OPERA
Andrew Clements

No dice

The Gambler
Coliseum; further performances May 6, 10, 14 & 18

The Queen of Spades, Rusalka and now *The Gambler:* English National Opera has turned out three productions of Slavonic operas in as many months, all of them directed by David Pountney. Strictly speaking, this latest staging is not new, for it was first seen at the Netherlands Opera eight years ago. Perhaps the vintage explains why it differs so markedly from Pountney's recent efforts at the Coliseum: there are no extraneous glosses on libretto or action, everything remains as Prokofiev extracted it from Dostoievsky's short, autobiographical novel, presented in clean, crisply dramatic images.

Prokofiev worked on no less than ten operatic projects at one time or another in his life. Three were abandoned incomplete; another three were not staged until after his death, one was dropped after the première because of ideological problems. Only *The Love of Three Oranges* was instantly successful, and in recent years it has been joined by *War and Peace*, especially in the ENO production that has been one of the company's outstanding successes. But *The Gambler* has hovered on the brink of acceptance. It was written between 1915 and 1917, when Prokofiev was in his mid-20s, got swept away by the Revolution and was not finally staged until 1929 in Brussels. By that time Prokofiev had completed two more ballets as well as the *Three Oranges,* so that the score of *The Gambler* was revised and lightened more effectively for the stage.

It remained, however, one of Prokofiev's

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most daring scores, with an approach to constructing a stage work that does away almost entirely with set pieces, and throws at the audience an exhausting barrage of motifs and characters. The sharply drawn caricatures from Dostoievsky's novel are preserved, and the first half of the opera is largely taken up with defining them, their common obsession with money and complex relationships. The surreal way in which they break into and fall out of the action recalls Berg's method in the second act of *Lulu*, where a similar range of moral bankrupts dominates the action; here, though, Prokofiev manages to tease out the central thread of the story only in the last third of the opera, when the ambiguous relationship between Alexei and Paulina stands in proper relief. The climax arrives in a brilliantly virtuoso gambling scene in which the slickness of the caricatures is woven into a complex ensemble; it marks the point at which Alexei becomes ensnared, the turning point of elegant farce into disturbing tragedy.

For long stretches the sheer exuberance of the score holds the attention when all else fails; the tense athleticism familiar in Prokofiev's early piano concertos underpins vocal lines that maintain a strenuous lyricism. Only when a lonely, winding theme is introduced in the fourth act does one realise what was missing previously; a whole side of the composer's personality has been deliberately suppressed, for the sake of creating an operatic style that is aggressively and self-consciously new.

A production of *The Gambler* must tread a careful course between slapstick and dogged character analysis. Pountney is by and large successful in this, though not all of his gallery of rogues is equally effective. Christian Badea's conducting is a little disappointing; in a score that one senses should have perpetual sparkle and bite the orchestral playing is often bland and thickly textured, a homogeneous blend instead of a febrile mesh of lines. As Alexei, Graham Clark is well cast; his uningratiating tone, which seemed so unwelcome to *The Queen of Spades*, is far more appropriately incisive here. He managed the transition from virtual supernumerary at the start of the opera to tragic hero at the end with admirable assurance; it is the fault of the opera rather than the singer that the final scene is less moving than it is in Dostoievsky. Sally Burgess as Paulina really came into her own in that last act; her earlier appearances lacked sparkle, but the challenge of the later, more demanding scenes was met well. The entourage – Jean Rigby's Blanche, Stuart Kale's Marquis, John Tomlinson's General and Ann Howard's Grandmother – were more or less convincing, odd moments of self-indulgence excepted.

Whether the production makes a case for *The Gambler* is doubtful. No amount of nursing will remove the basic flaws in Prokofiev's scenario, nor will any conductor be able to do much to arrest the breathless frenzy of the score. No doubt our leading opera houses should be presenting the neglected and the untried, but in this case enthusiasm has possibly strayed just a little too far. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Metre-maid

Educating Rita (15)
Classic, Haymarket; Warner
Barbarosa (PG)
Screen on the Green
Elstree Calling
NFT, to 31 May
Claude Lelouch
NFT, to 12 May
Alone in the Dark (18)
Cinecenta; Classic, Oxford Street

Pygmalionism would be incited in the mind, if not the loins, of any provincial don worth his weight in disillusion and drunkenness by the irruption into his self-pitying life of a cocky, merry and intellectually-starved item looking like Julie Walters. Willy Russell's stage-play converts neatly to the screen under Lewis Gilbert's decent, 'opening-out' direction: **Educating Rita** has its cobblestones over which Ms Walters's high heels clack vulgarly towards a date with the Open University (Michael Caine, as the Eng Lit lush bearded like the pard and astonishingly good as a superannuated Lucky Jim), its establishing interludes as dyed-blonde Rita segues from a job as hairdresser to a job as waitress in a smart restaurant, brashly breaking into the world of High Culture as she learns to modify her 'honest' reactions to E. M. Forster ('frigging Forster – he gets on my tits') and lets her hair grow back to its natural brown. It happened with Meryl Streep the other week, this unbalancing seduction by a performance, and now Julie Walters turns up, with her dead-level intensity, a chameleon blaze of intelligence, to burn some of the warts off a class-switch tragi-comedy of dire pretensions.

Or as much as she, Rita-Metre-Maid (hear the music throb up as she recites a bit of Blake – 'O Rose, thou art sick' – to her miraculous new-manner-born), can help a potentially rich theme of making the break from Harold Robbins to Henrik Ibsen work in the environment it is given. Mr Russell, who wrote both play and film, tends to pussyfoot round the predicament of onward-and-upward mobility by striking off quick, funny lines, gifts for good actors. But there is a very proper awareness of something else – like, what the hell is the *use* of learning to parrot sensitive reactions to art or wines (the fine-palate nonsense gets a passing acerbity) – seething beneath Rita's improbable advance to the sort of literacy some of us glibly take for granted. Magnificent Ms Walters and a subdued Mr Caine do their damnedest to intimate, even body forth, pained questions about culture-gaps. Not their fault if the outcome is dream-easy, an airport walkaway, bitter-sweet evasion.

Fred Schepisi may offer problems for proof-readers but he is the Australian director who made the diversely fascinating *The Devil's Playground* (tormented Catholic boyhood) and *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* (turn-of-the-century Aboriginal on the run). With **Barbarosa** he has transferred his talent to the Texas of 1878 and come up with a confounded mess. His scriptwriter William D. Wittliff has joined pigtailed folksinger Willie Nelson – as the ageing red-beard of the title – and gosh-faced and grinny big Gary Busey – as a bad-lucked farm boy – in fortuitous outlawry; Nelson's Barbarosa, vagrant loner with legendary status among neighbouring Mexicans, keeps arising from graves after being shot to bits. There is enough incident in this pocket-epic (it hurtles in at 90 minutes) to furnish a TV horse-opera for months. Mr Schepisi's transmitted sense of urgency is strong – to a fault. Perhaps it reflects anxiety.

For how the Western was won and would now seem to be lost as a lucrative film genre is clearly ripe Ph.D. fodder for some bright spark. A tuppenny tip would be that the Vietnamese experience tore bloody great holes through all that old glory. The macho-mythology of frontiers, gun-toting, whiskey-slugging and wild wild wimmen – all the mock-noble horsing around for the benefit of vicarious heroes with bums safe on cinema seats – palled and paled against the realities of transgressing alien boundaries: napalm, hard drugs, dead babies. What-a-man-gotta-do was surely not this. And, as surely, some failure of nerve infiltrates Schepisi's too-late Western, veering between celebration and wake, keen image and keening homage. It's a mournful number.

'The cherubic old master Alfred Hitchcock', unwarily ventures Patricia Warren in her *Elstree: The British Hollywood* (Hamish Hamilton £9.95), a book that rarely uses one glowingly uncritical PR cliché when it can accommodate two or three. Visit this sketchy volume for its illustrations – which are often superb nudges to trips down memory-lane, albeit smudgy ones – rather than for its style. Misplaced commas hiccup one through the finances, fortunes and fantasies of a unique little bunch of studios currently displaying some of its cross-Atlantic connections in an eccentric South Bank pot-pourri, 'Elstree Calling', with *Lolita* the firmest bet and the 1929 E. A. Dupont *Piccadilly* (Anna May Wong as a dishwasher, later accompanied by Debroy Somers and his Band) as rankest outsider. Still out at the National Film Theatre, reckoning Geoff Brown as one of the sanest of movie tipsters, we feel conscience-bound to note his compilation of a little Lelouch season. He is perfectly correct in implying that this French director has a good film in him somewhere (it's in his NFT selection but I'm not telling); and there are more recent Lelouch events pending: 180 minutes of multi-lingual music and dance in *The Ins and the Outs* (*'Les Uns et les autres'*), 11 May, NFT; and a gala performance of *Edith et Marcel*, which 'relates to the happy years of Edith Piaf', on the preceding night, at the Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Alone in the Dark is already one too many. □

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FIRST PERSON

Bill Greenwell

The big sleep

JUST ABOUT every article I have ever read about a new anthology runs along the following lines. The responsible, sometimes irresponsible, indeed preferably reckless person who has done the sifting and lifting is offered some light praise. This falls upon his or her shoulders like an indifferent brand of dandruff. Now the critic, having swallowed after some unseemly chew what was doubtless intended to last a lifetime, takes out his pipe, sucks noisily, and begins to better the trepid anthologist with advice, prodding with a wet stem at his Definitions, and gesturing with the spare hand at what has carelessly been omitted, and in how cavalier a fashion.

This the critic feels confident in doing, since he has been paid, so to speak, to put the stuff in his pipe and smoke it.

One of the latest lots to come under the waiting hammer is *The Oxford Book of Death**. The *Oxford Book of Frogs*, say, or *Fruit*, would be to my mind more timely, but there it is. *Death*. The editor is familiar to us as Mr D. J. Enright of the Scholarship and Poetry sections. And Life, indeed Death being what it is, there's a safe bet not a solitary soul has sampled all the various sources here tapped but Enright, D. J. Hence, there will be plenty to peruse, much that is unfamiliar for all the family. He can do you Death (Funerals, Graveyards and), Death (Animals) and, should you wish, Death (Persecution, War, Plague and). There is a topping section on Suicide, another in which the tiny toes of Children tap the bucket.

It is all irreproachable, unimpeachable; the man has surely done his homework. If there were misprints, I missed them.

But for whom, and for what purpose (my briar is noisily out of my pocket, you notice) was this collation prepared, spiced? Where in the household might it be most handily available? These are the queries which hop most hastily into my head. A birthday present, perhaps, for some ailing aunt or other: 'Dear Auntie, many happy returns, that is if you believe in reincarnation, ho-ho.' What imitable wit shall the sender not be tempted to attempt upon the flyleaf? 'My dearest brother, when I saw this, I thought of you. The subscription to EXIT I am saving for Christmas.' 'Gran. Hope that this reaches you in time, & I am not late as usual.'

Perhaps the thing could be left lying idly between the plunger and the Harpic. It's certainly a cut above the usual entertainment provided for those with nothing better to do, and the urge to do it. It beats your pile of *Private Eyes* (often left in the loo, for some reason); it betters the 800-clue crossword with five of the less cryptic clues filled in, and no more, since someone swiped the biro.

'What on earth have you been doing?'

'I was reading Pepys's comments upon the unsaleability of periwigs after a plague.'

'Oh.'

Or perhaps it might squat ostentatiously upon that kind of shelf beside which the local drunk habitually spills himself at a party. It might absorb him, composed as it is of so many wondrously witty and pithy extracts, while the rest of the company gets on with the serious business of rifling his pockets or moving to another room.

THE TROUBLE with Death is, there is such a lot of it about. Had Mr Enright confined himself to Montaigne's quoted assertion that, had *he* composed a book, it would have consisted of instructive and numerous accounts of 'diverse deaths', the thing might possess at least a certain chill. One could be heartily sick with it. But as it stands, dip and dawdle in its pages as I may, there's little to grip me. Death, where is thy stink? I am forever letting my attention wander, or running my appropriate finger through the index, see if he's picked what I'd have picked: this of course is the particular kick of anthologies, the How Could He Have Overlooked That One. They are invitations to quibble and, so bottomless is the trough from which *The Oxford Book of Death* draws its water, one may endlessly be entertained by jotting down those mementoes mori he's missed.

Where is Beckett's forcep-fingered gravedigger? Or Orwell's candidly invented Hanging? Or Byron's careless lines:

> . . . we die, you know – and then –
> What then? I do not know, no more do you –
> And so goodnight.

Not in. Omitted. Unaccountably overlooked in the heat of the mo. This seems an odd oversight to me. But I shall belabour this splendidly disconnected collection with only one further quote, one which would, at the very least, render the whole shebang more relevant to the bedside table.

I am not referring, mind you, to the desultory pilfering of a page or two before turning in to one's pillow for the night. I am thinking of the sort of selection which might send you off on your daily hike with an extra helping of thought. My choice is from Pinter's *The Birthday Party*:

> Some people don't like getting up in the morning. I've heard them. Getting up in the morning, they say, what is it? Your skin's crabby, you need a shave, your eyes are full of muck, your mouth is like a boghouse, the palms of your hands are full of sweat, your nose is clogged up, your feet stink, what are you but a corpse waiting to be washed?

There now. *That's* what I call something to send you on your way whistling. □

*Ed. D. J. Enright, Oxford £9.50.

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2769 **Set by B. Mooring**

The Bible is constantly being re-translated and rewritten in various styles and dialects. Please rewrite any passage as it might be told by Barbara Cartland, P. G. Wodehouse, O. Henry or A. A. Milne. Up to 150 words, by 20 May.

No 2766 **Set by Pat Blackford**

Extracts from a book of modern etiquette.

Report **By Toby Jugge**

Cartloads of helpful advice about TV and supermarkets, of course, but few of you attempted dole-queue etiquette ('Increasingly difficult to be humorous about this topic,' Terry Towling justly complained). An hon mensh to Sukey Jessup, One of the Few; eight jingling smackeroonies to the winners.

At the Supermarket

To behave *comme il faut* at the supermarket, it is *de rigueur* to hold up the queue behind you as long as possible, especially when immediately behind you there is a little old lady with only a quarter pound of tea in her trolley (being arthritic, she cannot carry a basket).

These are the points to remember:

1) Pick up the only tin of tomato soup without a price ticket on it – this will cause a considerable hold-up.
2) Proceed to pack your items into your shopping bag as slowly as possible and go on until you have finished *before* you get out your chequebook.
3) Rummage in your handbag for a pen.
4) Laboriously fill in the counterfoil *first*.
5) Rummage again in your handbag for your banker's card.
6) When you finally go out, be sure to leave your trolley *behind* you.

LISELOTTE LESCHKE

Watching Television

Meals: The chest is the correct place for bread, biscuits, etc. Crumbs should *not* be brushed off but propelled into the fireplace by standing sharply. (Seating at formal meals should be staggered so everyone can see the screen.)
Visitors: Turn sound down and position oneself to continue viewing over visitor's shoulder.
Nose: Except in extreme cases (see Party Political Broadcasts) nose-pickings should not be flicked at sceen but dropped down side of sofa.
Conversation: The following must be employed during viewing:
a) I always say the adverts are better than the programmes; b) Of course, he's dead now, you know; c) I don't know why they bother – it's all rubbish; d) They say he's very nice/a slimy toad in real life; e) You wouldn't think he had a wooden leg/a wig/a drink problem to see him doing that; f) Whatever you say, he's done a lot for charity.

N. J. WARBURTON

At the Football Match

It is important to remember that any member of your opponents' team who has been transferred from club X – even, or especially, if the transfer

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signalled his ability and success – must be known as an 'X reject'.

Referees may occasionally be praised if they show that they understand the habitual foul play and cheating of the opposing team; linesmen, never.

Convention dictates that no player in the visiting side is heterosexual, and most are addicted to self-abuse. However, really offensive insults are reserved for the side you support.

Fans should help preserve the modesty and humility of very famous visiting teams and players by chanting the anthem 'Who The Fucking Hell Are You?' as they appear on the pitch.

Never forget that the unusual geometry of a football field allows instances of offside to be fully and categorically perceived by spectators from any angle or distance when they are invisible to a nearby match official.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

At the Supermarket

It is not polite to comment, openly or by implication, on the contents of another shopper's trolley. You must avoid such remarks as:

'She must have a bloody great dog!'

'I do believe some *people* eat Kitekat.'

'They say that, in the long run, it's cheaper to drink at home.'

'You can see that all that low-calorie food just doesn't work.'

'Some people are simply too idle to shell peas.'

'I always wondered what sort of person bought that rubbish.'

At the check-out, you should avoid saying: 'Nowadays the banks seem to give cheque books to almost anybody.'

You should not count another's purchases aloud at the 'Eight items or under' check-out.

HAZEL STANLEY

Watching Television

Calls of nature should be heeded only during commercial breaks, and then strictly upon the pretext of preparing a beverage. Exceptions may be made during party political broadcasts, when a dignified exit might be made in search of a Bath Oliver or perhaps a digestive biscuit. Beer is best imbibed from the can direct: noisy pouring into glass distracts, even during lulls in action or plot.

Before controls are adjusted, consultation should quietly be sought with the other members of the family; a discreet but silent hand signal, perhaps. Should a change to one or other of the available channels be required, distract one's companion's attention gently before pressing the remote control. Remark, we suggest, on the cat's intriguing posture. Subsequently, polite comment, as 'I had not expected such exceptionally masterly parody of professional football to feature so essentially in du Maurier's plots: wonderful' may prevent unnecessary distress.

WILL BELLENGER

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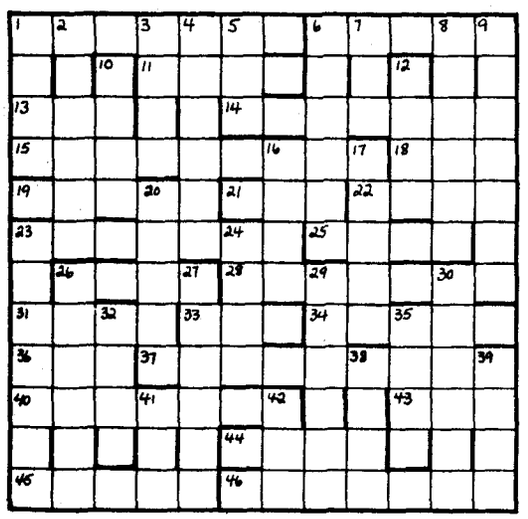
Salamanca 68

'10'
10

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 68, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 31 May.



Answers clued by definition only must be given special treatment in part before entry. The centres of squares thus treated should be joined in numerical order (and then last to first) by straight lines. The resultant effect should display the solver's reward for diligence. Other clues and answers are normal. Chambers 1977 Edition gives most words except two proper names, two simple combinations, and 2 & 5 (in OED).

Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

1 Work produced by odd couples (7)
6 Giant periodical to be sold around (5)
11 Teeth (7)
13 A tree (quite the reverse?) (3)
14 The real form of North Carolinian (7)
15 Like some fossils found in cold ria perhaps (9)
18 A letter from Mr Holmes (3)
19 Slugs (5)
21 Important (7)
22 Preventing decay (7)
23 Spanish chap about to load old gun (7)
25 Aggressive remark: 'Blast!' (4)
26 Died (5)
28 Unable to survive (8)
31 Growl that's sounded loudly from the rear (4)
33 Herb (4)
34 Terry, struggling? (5)
36 Tolls (7)
37 Viceroy's territory (9)
40 Napkins one's soiled messily (7)
43 Cuppa, hot, for long-drawn-out stirring? (3)
44 Monkey, a young female one (4)
45 Utterly stern and unyielding (5)
46 Excited by it, hair'll fall out (7)

DOWN

1 Pertaining to ears at tops of true Indian corn (4)
2 Recipient of support (8)
3 Examine parts of Pound's Cantos (4)
4 Reddish-yellow pigment (8)
5 (You) lie no longer (4)
6 Could be Les May or, if unlimited, more than just Eel? (6)
7 All smokers have small bits of this? (3)
8 *Single* in chart success? (Making the number I?) (6)
9 A clog worn by a man? (7)
10 Ridge at end of bleak place (4)
12 Whom Caesar overcame (6)
16 Novelist (8)
17 Mud, you see, that's hot right round centre of volcanoes (5)
20 Drawings etc. from design studio (7)
23 In these you get Power when shrining Most High One? (7)
24 Diamond necklace (7)
26 No Scot made to work in a mine (6)
27 Noise made with mouth – the blind following it? (6)
29 Diamond wedding (8)
30 All the wicked and deadly (6)
32 Passage closure (7)
35 Gossip of a beastly nature, say? (4)
38 Rides and amusements (7)
39 In New York he's almost a lord (4)
41 Long primitive trumpet (3)
42 Locate short ride (3)

Solution to Salamanca 67

CH	APR	AS	SI	S	IN	FAN	T	IL	E
IC	I	C	LE	ALO	T	G	RO	U	CHO
O	SC	AR	NE	UT	RIN	O	JA	NU	ARY
P	OR	I	FE	RA	SIC	A	N	SU	B
RO	PE	D	BRU	NC	H	NA	GM	A	AL
F	EL	SP	AR	E	A	N	CA	L	L
OR	GA	I	Y	YAR	ST	A	N	DT	OS
MA	R	CH	BAR	D	I	C	TH	RU	SH
CU	LIC	IN	E	WAN	LY	H	AR	P	O
BE	FO	G	GE	D	C	AM	IS	OL	E

Unclued answers: January, February, March: Groucho, Chico, Harpo. Solvers needed apr/il/fo/ol to complete the otherwise empty squares. Also – slight alternatives exist to the way FELSPAR/PEELGARLIC and NAGMAAL/ARYBALLOS can be entered.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 67

R. A. England (London W3)
Miss L. Eveleigh (Bristol)
Stuart Woods (Banbury)

Solution to 1398

D	O	M	I	C	I	L	E		C	H	A	F	E	D
E		A		O		I			A		L		R
M	A	R	G	R	A	V	E		P	I	R	A	T	E
E		R		I		I			L		N		S
A	R	O	M	A		N	A	M	E	S	A	K	E	S
N		W		N		G		O			I		I
				D	I	S	T	U	R	B	A	N	C	E
S		S		E		T		N		A		G		R
P	A	T	E	R	N	O	S	T	E	R				
L		U				N		B		C		B		H
A	N	D	R	O	M	E	D	A		E	V	A	D	E
S		L		F				T		L		L		A
H	E	A	L	T	H		S	T	R	O	L	L	E	R
E		N		E				E		N		E		T
S	I	D	I	N	G		I	N	F	A	N	T	R	Y

Prizewinners to 1398

Mrs Jean Loutz (France)
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(Department of Social Studies and Welfare)

Required for **September, 1983,** a

LECTURER GRADE I

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Further particulars and application forms can be obtained from the **Principal at the College.** Closing date: 16 MAY, 1983

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A suitably qualified applicant is required to assist the Union's Research Officer. The work will involve the maintenance and preparation of research data on banking and other related conditions of employment, preparation of arbitration cases and study papers for the Union's officials and committees.

Knowledge or experience of such subjects as health and safety at work, job evaluation and work measurement techniques and company analysis would be an advantage as would knowledge of trade union work and industrial relations.

Commencing salary £9,017 per annum

The position is based at the Union's Headquarters at Wimbledon.

Application forms are available from:
BIFU, Sheffield House, 17 Hillside, Wimbledon, London SW19 4NJ (01-946 9151).

Closing date for receipt of application forms 27 May, 1983.

Lady Margaret Hall Settlement
Employment Project
needs a
RESEARCHER
(6 mths post)

to look into the employment needs of women with disabilities in Lambeth. Research ability essential. Salary **£8,925** p.a. incl. LW (pro rata).

For details write: **Sonia Lauber or Sheila Stace, (Job share) LMHS, 460 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 3LX.** Closing date: **21 May.**

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GLC
Working for London

– Women's Committee –

Join us in fighting for a better deal for women in London

The Women's Committee has created 5 new posts for advisers to work within its Support Unit. Each will have specific responsibility for important aspects of the Unit's work but advisers will also be expected to work as collectively as possible with some overlap of responsibilities.

All advisers will need to work closely with women's, voluntary and community groups and liaise with the appropriate statutory bodies. Some evening work will be necessary.

Salaries will be within the range of £11,880-£13,353 inclusive and all posts are suitable for part-time workers (pending negotiations being concluded on job sharing).

Legal Adviser

To provide advice on current and proposed legislation affecting women. Knowledge of the relevant statutes relating to equality of opportunity and welfare benefits would be an advantage. Ref 54.

Information and Campaigns Adviser

To facilitate public awareness of the problems and issues affecting women and be instrumental in campaigning about these issues. Ref 55.

Childcare Adviser

To develop and implement policies aimed at improving the provision of childcare facilities in London. Working with women's, voluntary and community groups to develop grant applications. Ref 57.

Health Adviser

To develop and implement policies to improve women's health and the provision of health care services. Focusing particularly on the needs of women who are mentally ill, elderly, or have a disability; those who are black or of ethnic minority origin; and women who care for those in poor health, whether paid or unpaid. Ref 58.

Sports, Art and Recreation Adviser

To develop and implement policies to improve the provision of facilities and services for women in London, with particular attention to the needs of girls and young women. Ref 56.

For further details write, clearly stating for which position you are applying and quoting the appropriate reference, to the Director-General's Department, Greater London Council, Room 203, The County Hall, London SE1 7PB or telephone 01-633 1527. Closing date: 30th May 1983.

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Application forms and further details from:

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LISTINGS

FRI 6 MAY

LONDON until 13 May. 'Drawn from Life' – an exhibition of drawings by refugee children from El Salvador. Dixon Gallery Foyer, Institute of Education, Bedford Way, WC1. 9.30-4.30pm (Sat until noon. Closed Sun). Adm free. **Org El Salvador Committee for Human Rights. 01-359 1836.**

LONDON. Cuban Health Service. Reception for Cuban doctors, slide shows, talk, discn. 7.30pm North Islington Welfare Centre, Manor Gardens, N7 (side of Royal Northern Hosp, off Holloway Road). Collection. **Org Britain-Cuba Resource Centre.**

6-8 MAY LONDON. Weekend conf on Basic Skills in post-16 Education: Useful learning? Starts 7pm Fri. Uplands Halls of Residence, 1 Etherstone Road, SW16. Resident £30/non-resident £10 or £2.50. **Org NATFHE General Studies Section. Details: Colin Waugh 01-903 4940 (h)/01-802 3111 x 57 (w).**

6-8 MAY READING. Women for Peace: weekend workshop. Creche & accom. avail. **Org Reading CND 0734-61361.**

SAT 7 MAY

FULHAM. Welfare rights fair. 2-5pm Clem Attlee Hall, Rylston Road, SW6. Creche. **Org Fulham Labour Party.**

7-8 MAY LONDON 'Media in the '80s' weekend conference. Spkrs incl Harriet Harman, Jake Ecclestone, Anna Coote, Patricia Hewitt, John Pilger. 10-5.30pm Sat (Adm £3 waged/£1 unwaged) (plus evening benefit at 7.30-midnight: Adm £3 waged/£1.50 unwaged) and 10am Sun. (Adm free) Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way, SE14. Creche. **Org Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. Details: 01-437 2795.**

LONDON 'Britain out of Ireland' and 'Self-determination for the Irish people' demo. Spkrs. Assemble 1pm Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. **Donations & enquiries: May 7th Committee, PO Box 353, London NW5 4NH.**

BRISTOL Non-violent direct action training day for Upper Heyford June 2nd blockade (mixed). 9.30am-4pm Friends Meeting House, River Street, Bristol 2. **Details: Bristol 662579.**

SHEFFIELD National conf on alternative models of TV news. Day conf. Beaver Hill Campus, Handsworth Grange Road. Adm £2.50 waged/£1 unwaged. **Org Sheffield TV Group. Details: 0742-748894 or 0742-453660.**

LONDON Feminism & Therapy lecture given by Joanna Ryan. Tea/workshop discn/creche. 2pm Theatre, Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, N7. **Org Dept of Applied Social Studies, PNL/Women's Therapy Centre.**

BROCKWELL PARK. Youth CND Festival. **Org CND 01-263 0977.**

SUN 8 MAY

LONDON. 'Films for Peace' incl 'America, from Hitler to MX', 'The Day After Trinity', 'No Place to Hide', '8 Minutes to Midnight', 'I Live in Fear', and 'Dr Strangelove'. Electric Cinema, 191 Portobello Road, W11. 5 hours of movies for £2.25; £2.00 in advance, £1 UB40. Tickets & details: Electric Cinema (01-727 4992), CND Shop 227 Seven Sisters Road, N4 & London CND (01-388 1628). **Org Ladbroke Grove CND. All proceeds to CND.**

LIVERPOOL People's March for Jobs '83 Benefit Concert. Au Pairs, local band. 8pm Warehouse, Fleet Street, Liverpool. **Org People's Campaign for Jobs and Peace.**

MON 9 MAY

LONDON. 'The Police and Criminal Evidence Bill 1983 – A Threat to Liberty' public meeting. Spkrs incl Richard du Cann QC, Roy Hattersley MP, Prof Stuart Hall, The Bishop of Stepney, Lord Gifford QC, Dr John Dawson. Adm free. 7.30pm Caxton Hall, Caxton Street, SW1.

LONDON. History Workshop seminar: 'Mother and Daughter: biography and autobiography' 7.30pm Black Horse Pub, Rathbone Place, W1. Adm free. **Org History Workshop Journal.**

9-14 MAY BERLIN. Second European Nuclear Disarmament Convention. **Contact Russell Foundation, Gamble Street, Nottingham 0602-784504.**

TUES 10 MAY

LONDON. The Origins of the Council Flat: a history of public housing. Six-week course. 7pm Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, NW1. **Details 01-387 2037.**

LONDON. Unionisation of law firms. Meeting to discuss rates of pay, bonuses, overtime, holidays, overcrowding, plus setting up inter-union committee. 7pm 203 North Gower Street, NW1 (TGWU offices). **Contact: Carolyn Taylor or Camilla Palmer 01-405 6256.**

10-14 MAY OXFORD. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. Production to support Oxford Playhouse Appeal Fund. Tom Stoppard to speak before Matinee 11 May. **Details: Kate Mosse 0865-724560.**

WED 11 MAY

LONDON. Approaches to Teaching for Resistance: Latin America. Spkr Chris Searle. 5.30-7.30pm. Conference Room, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, WC1. All welcome. **Org Centre for Multicultural Education.**

LONDON. Diego Garcia – a key to the new cold war? Talk and discn. 7pm Grafton Arms pub, 72 Grafton Way, W1. **Org London END.**

LONDON Nuclear-free Defence. Open forum with Frank Allaun, Pat Arrowsmith, Joan Maynard, Ann Pettit, Peter Tatchell, David Widgery. 6.30pm Gregory House, Mecklenburgh Square, WC1. **Org Heretic Books 01-800 5861.**

THURS 12 MAY

STOKE NEWINGTON. Public meeting to defend the right to demonstrate and call for an independent public inquiry into the death of Colin Roach. Spkrs incl Hugo Hunte, Gillian Whitelock, Brynley Heaven, FRFI, Beverly Jones, Socialist Action. 7.30pm Stoke Newington Library, Small Hall (Edwards Lane entrance), Stoke Newington Church Street, N16. **Org Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign. 01-729 5536.**

LONDON. Voluntary action and antenatal health care. Day conf. Fee £20 (£10 for voluntary orgs) incl copy of new report. 26 Bedford Square, WC1. **Org National Council for Voluntary Organisations. Details: Judy Beer 01-636 4066.**

ENFIELD. Mid-day action at Thorn-Brimar electronics factory. Spkr Ken Livingstone. 12 noon. **Org London Region CND Trade Union Committee. Contact: John Lynham 01-883 8882 (after 4pm).**

LONDON 'Poland now'. Meeting. Polish lawyers and journalists discuss the current state of martial law in Poland. 6pm House of Commons Committee Room (in name of Phillip Whitehead MP). Refreshments avail. **Org British Amnesty Lawyers' Group. Details: 01-836 5621.**

FORTHCOMING

14 MAY London. Fabian Society seminar on a non-nuclear defence strategy. Spkrs incl Robin Cook, Denzil Davies, Bill Niven, Gwyn Prins, Dan Smith, Uwe Stehr. Adm £3/Society members £2. Camden Town Hall. **Details: 01-222 8877.**

14 MAY London. Making jobs. Conf on new North London employment initiative. 10.30-4.30pm Poly of North London, Prince of Wales Road, NW5. Adm £3/unwaged 50p. **Details: CAITS 01-607 7079.**

16 MAY-4 JUNE Battersea. Women's Festival. Evg perfs of women's theatre, dance, cabaret, poetry & discns. Daytime workshops. Creche. Bridge Lane Theatre, Bridge Lane, SW11. **Details: Ann Cowie or Fay Blockley 01-288 8828/01-288 5185.**

21 MAY London Putting paper policies into practice: South London CND/Labour Movement conf. Spkrs & workshops. 10.5pm Battersea Arts Centre, 176 Lavender Hill, SW11. Adm £2/£1. **Details & registration forms: Mick Bradley 01-767 5053.**

22 MAY Paisley Fund-raising Rock Festival for Music Workshops for the unemployed. 11.45-4.30pm; 5.45-10.30pm. Paisley Town Hall. Adm £2.50/£1.50 unwaged. **Details: Glenis Fyfe (050 581) 6300.**

27-29 MAY Edinburgh First Scottish Women's Health Fair. Discns, stalls, films. West End and Princes St Gardens. **Org Scottish Health Education Group. Contact Berni Graham 031-229 4180 or 031-447 8044.**

28 MAY Liverpool National March & Rally to protest against cruel experiments on animals. Assemble 1.30pm William Brown Street (near Lime Street BR station). Spkrs Jean Pink, Paddy Broughton. **Details: Merseyside Animal Aid/BUAV 051-494 0470.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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NATIONAL THEATRE. 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'Guys and Dolls', 'Lorenzaccio'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'The Trojan War will not Take Place', 'A Map of the World'. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'Small Change', 'Kick for Touch'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE, EC1. 01-278 8916 (5 lines). CC. Group sales 01-379 6061. The Wells' Stagecoach. Phone B. O. for details.
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Meetings

J. D. BERNAL Peace Library Lecture 1983. Thursday, 12 May. Room 340, Huxley Building, Imperial College, Queen's Gate, London, SW7. 7pm. Professor V. L. Allen of Leeds University. Subject: 'Images and reality in the Soviet Union'. Impressions of a lengthy visit to the USSR.

RAMAKRISHNA VEDANTA CENTRE. Sunday talks on eastern thought and spirituality in London and Bourne End. All welcome. Vedanta magazine 50p. Details: Tel. 06285 28464.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 8 May 8 pm. 'White Lotus Day', H.P. Blavatsky Commemoration. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

Socialist Society

LONDON MONTHLY MEETINGS
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81 Long Acre, Covent Garden
London WC2: 7.30 p.m.

11 May: Raymond Williams
'Problems of the coming period'

15 June: Raphael Samuel
'The psychology of conservatism, past and present'

20 July: Elizabeth Wilson
'True love'

Details: 7 Carlisle Street, W1
01-734 8501

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